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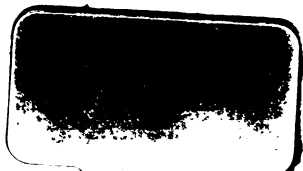
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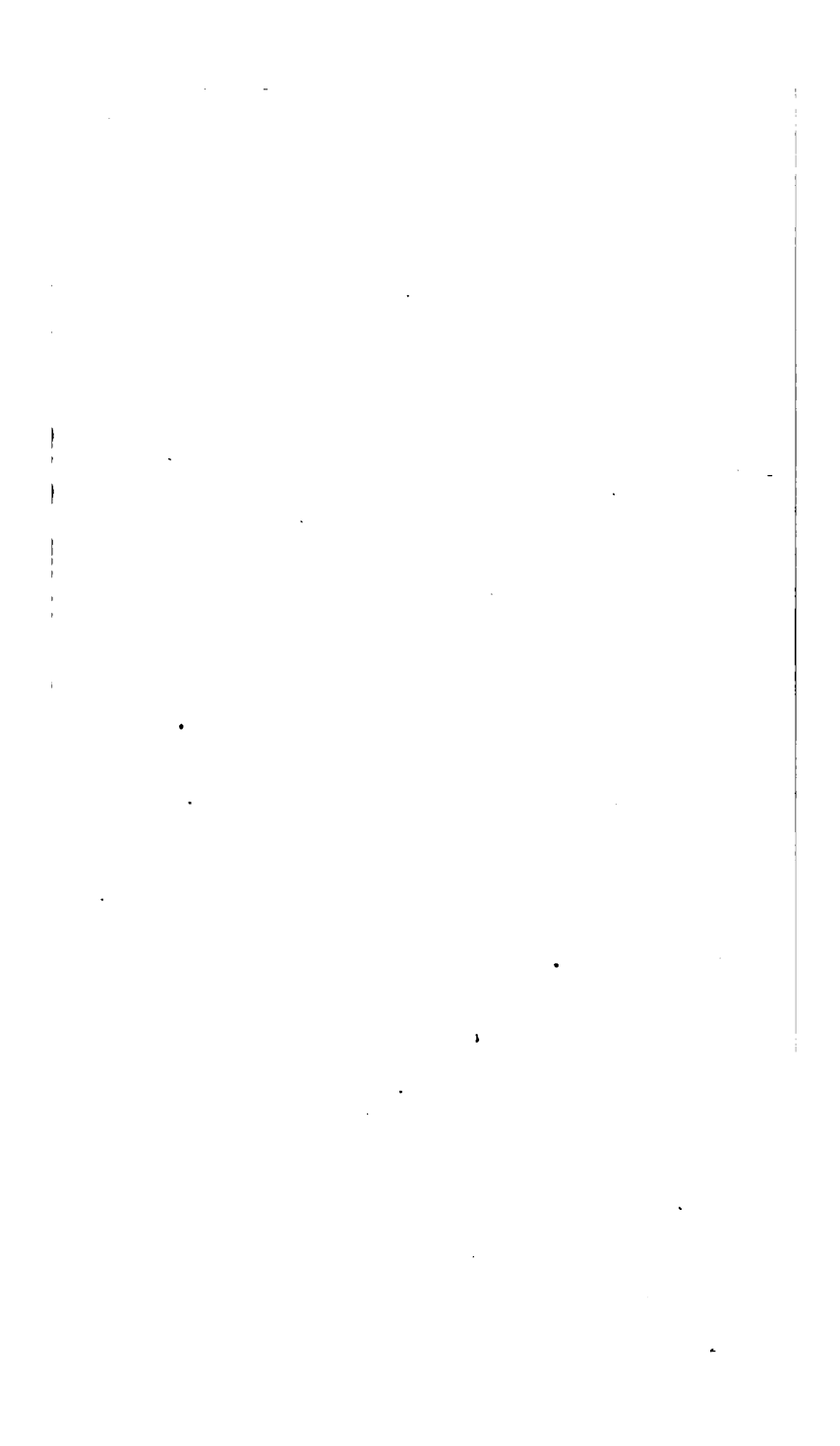


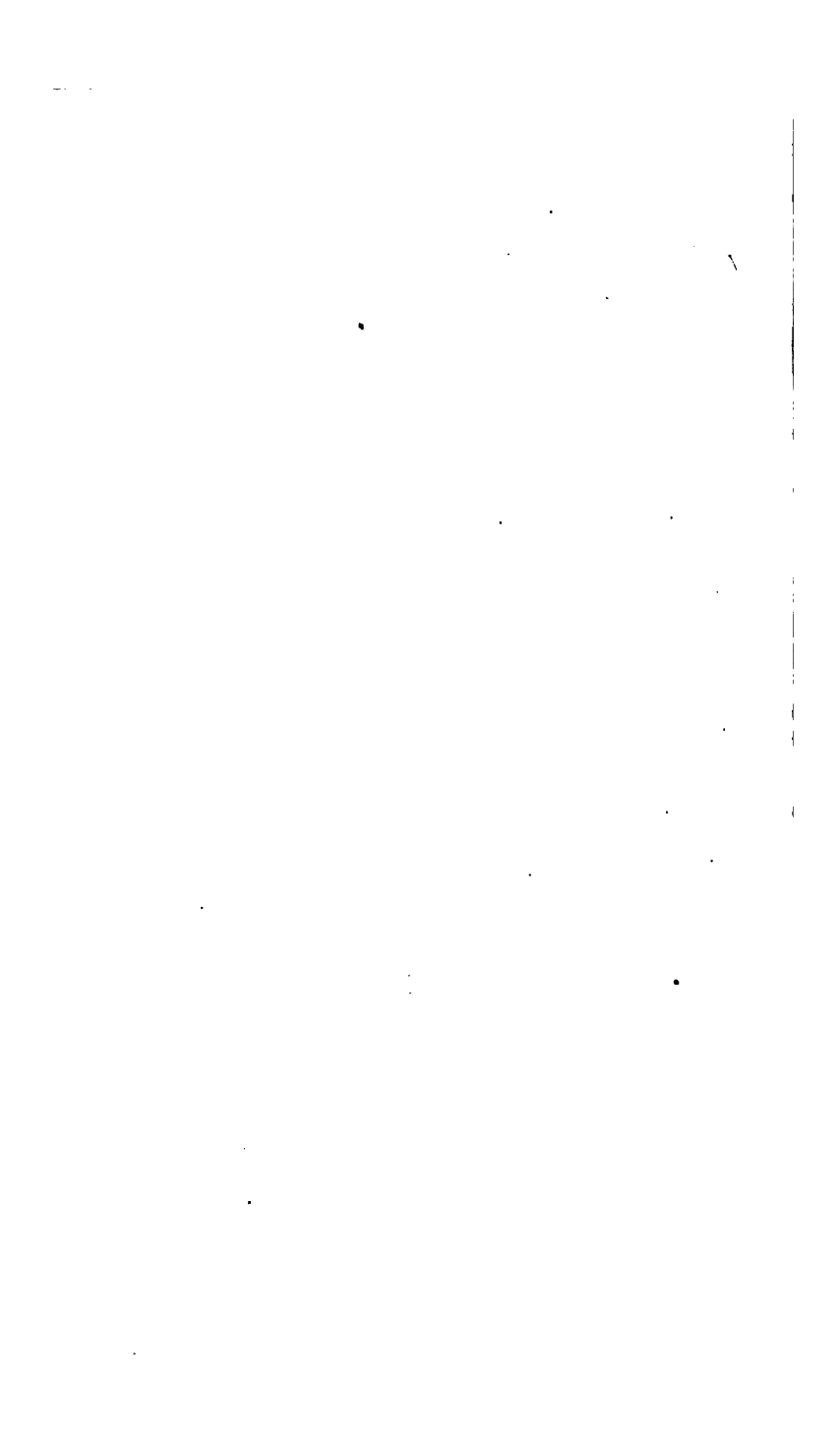
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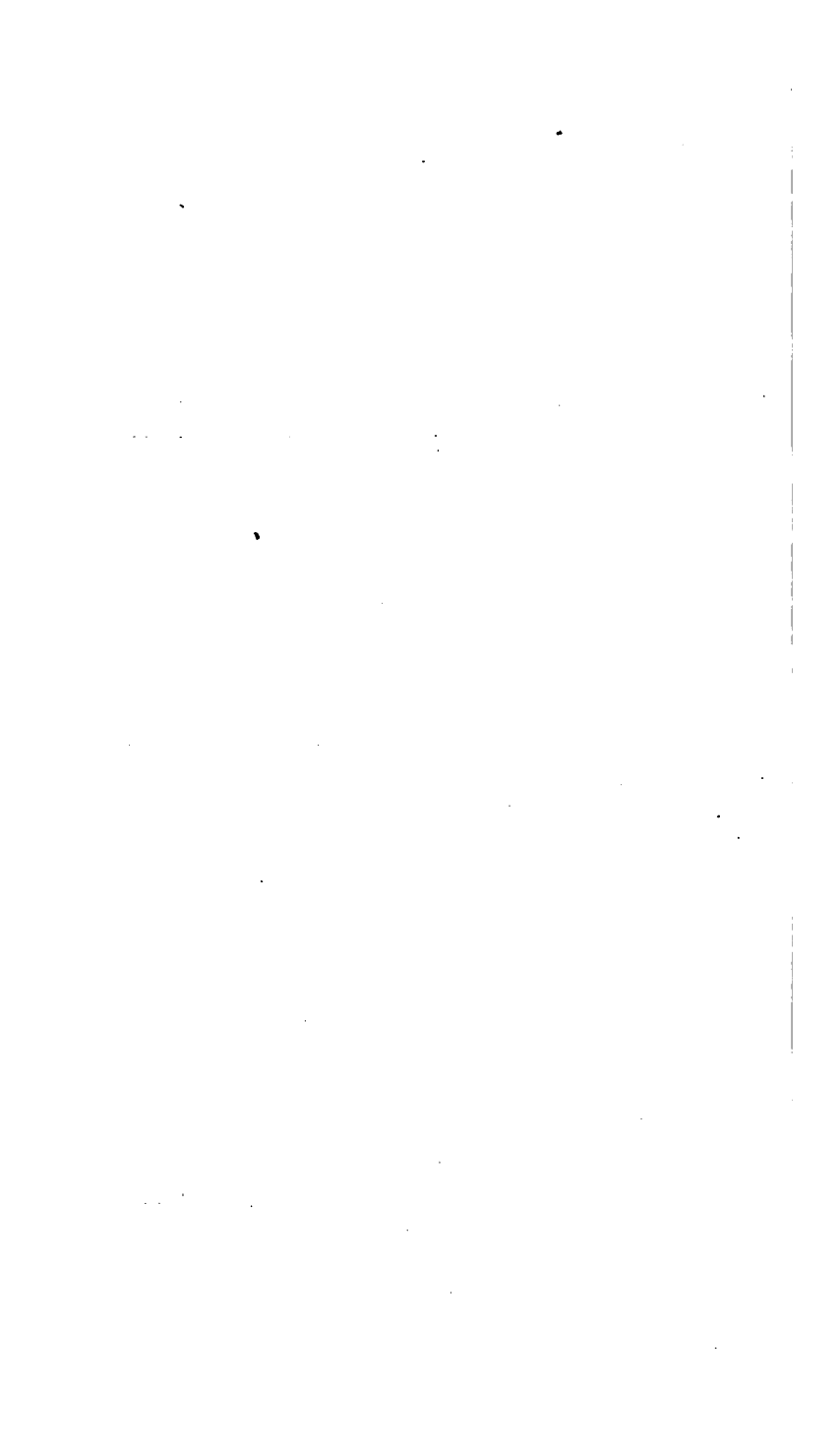
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LONDON:

WILLIAM FREEMAN, 69, FLEET STREET

1856.

101. i. 207.



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## THE ESSENES:

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HE desert region round Engaddi, and along the shore of the Dead Sea, is described by travellers as more desolate and savage than any known in Western Asia. The interminable sands of Arabia give not the same sense of loneliness, nor the rock-built remains of Petra the same impression of gloom. The solitude of the former is often suddenly broken by the fleet career of Arab horsemen, or the din of the advancing caravan; while the architecture and even the tombs of Petra revive the scenes of a past life, and, as the traveller advances amid heights of sculptured ruins, seem

to recall the forms, and voices, and busy animation of a former prosperity. But no thoroughfare of nations lies through the desert of Engaddi. The aspect of all things around—the Salt Lake on one side, the dark precipices of the rocky barrier towards Judea on the other—tells of nothing but desolation. No trace remains, as in Petra and Baalbec, of the hand of man. It looks a region of destruction—of unallayed gloom. All that could commemorate the former presence of humanity was engulfed. The lake, the sand-bank, the precipice, are all that may now be seen once were peopled towns and cultivated fields.



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How different is all this from the spectacle exhibited in a remote age to the patriarch Abraham. The whole country, as seen from the plain of Mamre, was then as a garden of the Lord. The Jordan, in deeper current, flowed through it, amid a luxuriant vegetation, and, as is generally believed, poured its waters into the Elanitic gulf. Cities of ancient origin occupied the line of the valley, and corn-fields, vineyards, pasture land, and forests, extended on either side in variegated richness. The space now covered by at least the southern portion of the Salt Lake and its shores, was then a fruitful soil, and the rocky battlements which now separate it from the rest of Judea, had probably not then been reared by the earthquake to their present elevation, nor then exhibited their blasted front to the eastern sky. This territory had been peopled far earlier than the rest of Canaan. Its cities were of richest structure, and were populous and flourishing. The din of traffic, the voices of mirth, the rural sounds of husbandry, rose once in mingled hum from that scene where now an awful silence reigns. A region which is frequented occasionally by wild Arab hordes, or which the footstep of some exploring traveller now rarely disturbs, was erewhile the populous land of cities and kingdoms.

Such as the traveller finds it at this day, it has been from the remote time when convulsion and flame effaced its glory. From the day of its desolation, when the patriarch gazed last on its beauty, it became, in a great degree, a secluded and blasted desert. The traditions of its catastrophe settled in gloom upon it, and there linger still. Even now the people of neighbouring regions never allude to it, except with awe and bated breath. It is a land—that territory from Engaddi to the extremity of the Dead Sea—doomed to perpetual solitude and horror.

Yet one age, in the long period of its desolation, witnessed the occupation of this "valley of the shadow of death." For about two centuries it seemed reclaimed from the destiny which consigned it to loneliness. Some 150 years before the Christian era, there might be seen, in the northern districts of this desert, groups of humble dwellings, and patches of cultivated land, and a scattered population busied in the toils of husbandry. Let us attempt to picture them. Arrayed in garb of faded white, the inhabitants are intent on their field-

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tasks, or, near their dwellings, are engaged in some handicraft. But their toils are pursued in unbroken silence! Nor do they give themselves to various and independent occupations, as each one's impulse moves him; but work in bands, at the direction of a superior, uncheered by interchange of glance or speech. Yet they are not slaves, but freemen all. These bands of toil-worn husbandmen are here by their free election, and even importunity. None of them natives of this desolate province, but voluntary exiles from their country and homes, these men, some in drooping age, and some in the prime of manhood, are bound together in a fraternity of faith and devotion, and have taken up their home in this gloomy retreat. Separated irretrievably from the free intercourse of the rest of mankind, and located in a region all but inaccessible, they have devoted themselves to a life of silence, meditation, and toil. They are Jewish anchorites, who are come to this desolate retreat, to extort a scant subsistence from sterility, and from silence and fatigue to win abstraction of thought for heavenly objects.

Such were the people whose presence interrupted, for a few ages, the solitude of the Dead Sea; whose thoughtful gaze contemplated its shores; whose choral songs broke its deep silence. The duration of their history, as a distinct people and sect in the desert, may be variously conjectured at a century and a half, or two centuries, according as we fix their origin earlier or later, before the time of Christ. That they continued to his time, though not alluded to in sacred history, is beyond question. It is equally certain that they survived to the period of the fall of Jerusalem, and that, in their own province, they mingled their valour and their sufferings in the last struggles of their country with Rome.

In this brief outline we have indicated generally the character of the Essenes, of whose principles, aim, and rule of life, we purpose to give some account in these pages. The chief notices respecting them are to be found in Josephus and Philo. But their singular mode of life and character attracted also the curiosity of Pliny, and received some slight but graphic touches from his pen. He writes of them, that they were a singular people, who dwelt on the west side of the lake Asphaltites; that they were a solitary kind living without marriage or money, and subsisting on

of the palm tree. He adds, that they were constantly recruited by new comers, whom the surges of ill fortune had made weary of the world, in which manner the sect was kept up without any being born among them—so prolific unto them was the repentance of others!

Our materials on this part of Jewish history are scanty, but we must make the best use we can of them, in attempting a brief sketch of a sect which offers itself as a spectacle of singular interest to the historian, the theologian, and the philosopher. The Essenes were scarcely alluded to in a preceding tract on the origin and development of other Jewish sects. The reason why no occasion arose for such allusion, even by casual or anticipative reference, is their perfect separation from Jewish political history. The Essenes are not seen to mingle in the affairs of their country; nor did they assume any course, hostile or otherwise, towards the other chief sects of the Jews. They were withdrawn—and this was the condition of their existence—from the abodes and society of their countrymen at large, and took up their home in a remote and inaccessible seclusion. They seldom, even as individuals, visited the holy city; nor was an Essene, except very rarely, seen to ascend the steps of the temple. They were thus so isolated and distinct in their whole character and history, and so remote from the strifes and aims of the other sects, that in considering the career of these latter, no occasion could arise of alluding to the Essenes, whether as regards their interfering action, or the contrast or similarity of their general character. This sect comes before us as a perfectly unique community, no less remote in purpose and habit from the rest of their nation, than sequestered in their lonely, silent locality.

The Essenes have, however, still higher claims on our notice than those resting merely on the singularity of their history and character. They stand eminent in history, as exhibiting the first example of a society, combined and regularly constituted for the purposes of religious meditation and abstraction from the world. They rank in this respect far above the other sects, for their elevated purpose, and their severe prosecution of that purpose, by however mistaken a process, in a life of toil, self-denial, solitude, and contemplation. This sect, moreover, subsisted in the times of our Lord,

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although not the faintest reference is made in the sacred record of the Evangelists to its existence—so distant and complete was its seclusion. Finally, the Essenes furnished not only the example, but most probably the model, to the anchorite institutions grafted in very early times on Christianity, being copied first by the Therapeutæ in Upper Egypt, and these latter imitated and surpassed by the Christian Cœnobites. We may add, the Essenes, in creed and in character, approach much nearer to the standard of true excellence, under their circumstances, than either of the other sects, if we except the Karaites, who may have contributed to multiply their ranks.

We shall briefly discuss, if it may not even suffice to enumerate, some of the many questions which have arisen regarding their *name*, their *origin*, and their *supposed relation to other sects*; after which, we shall give as faithful an account of their *character and mode of life* as the notices of history can enable us to furnish respecting this extraordinary people.

### THEIR NAME AND ORIGIN.

With respect to their *name*—how to be correctly written, what it imports, and whence derived—those who have most industriously explored Jewish antiquities have come to no determinate agreement.\* Whether they are more properly to be designated Essenes, or Hessæi, has been left an unsettled question. The higher probability is in favour of the designation Hessæi, and it is supposed to be taken from “Essa,” the name of a town where the sect at first dwelt, but the situation of which is unknown. From this same name also, with a slightly different formation, the title “Essenes” might be derived. Yet this derivation from the name of a town seems to us doubtful as the designation of a people who *dwelt in no towns*, except the groups of dwellings may be called such, which they had reared, of meanest dimensions and materials, in the desert. But the question is scarcely worth the space we have given to it.

Obscure as is the origin of their name, that of the sect itself is equally beyond the reach of history. How it arose, from what religious or social impulse, who were the first to form it, and at what date it was constituted an organized

\* Ugolini Thesaurus, vol. xxi.

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community, the most ancient authorities on the subject fail to determine. We can only mark the era of the first notices of the historian respecting it; but then those notices refer to it as existing, and therefore as having had a previous history of considerable interval. Yet some singular origin it must have had, blended with incident, circumstance, and persons. A time may be conjectured in imagination, and that, perhaps, not very remote from the first allusions of history to its name, when the sect of the Essenes was not, though the latent tendencies preparatory to its formation already existed in society. Then, or soon after, the movement commenced. Some person or persons, destined by their tone of character to influence their fellow men, conceived the first idea of an abstraction from the world, and of gathering, in the horrid desert bordering on the Asphaltic lake, a community consecrated to religious contemplation. Who were these men? what qualities of mind distinguished them? what was the course of action which they pursued? when did they form their first enthusiastic little band? when first did they tear themselves from the sweet intercourse of social life? when did they journey to the wild district of their future home? in what numbers were they first assembled there? when did they confer upon and settle the severe discipline which should inexorably govern them and their followers? These would be all of them points highly interesting, not to a Jewish reader only, but to the Christian student. They relate to circumstances and stages in the commencement of the project which *must* have had some form of reality in the origin of the Essene life in the desert. But the picture of their earlier history must be faintly traced in imagination only. The vestiges of its real incidents are vanished as completely as the traces of their footprints are gone from the sands around the Asphaltic lake. We can only attempt to kindle the reader's attention to the multiplied suppositions and inquiries this part of our subject involves; but are forced to add, that antiquity is wholly silent concerning them.

### THE SUPPOSED RELATION OF THE ESSENES TO OTHER SECTS.

By writers on Jewish antiquities it has been considered as worthy of some attention, in that exhaustive process which leaves nothing unexplored, to cast a glance to *other known*

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*sects*, in order to ascertain whether, in their names or principles, a solution can be obtained as to the origin of the Essenes. It was deemed just possible to detect analogies in these, more or less clear, which would give a clue to the existence of the new religious combination sought after. But no satisfactory conclusion was gathered from these collateral points of reference; yet it will interest the reader, we think, if we quote a specimen of this sort of speculation. He will find it given at length in the folios of Ugolinius. Was the Essene sect an offshoot of that of the Chasidim, or the earlier Pharisees? Animated with the like enthusiasm, were these identified in principles and pursuits? Was Essenism the sublimated spirit of that age, taking to itself a purer form, and acting in a different manner? But the rejection of ceremonial ritualism, and the neglect of sacrifice and of the temple-worship, precluded these suppositions. It was next asked, if the Essenes were not the Hasideans mentioned in one of the books of the Maccabees? But then, who were these same Hasideans? If they are unknown, the comparison with them is futile. Most probably, however, they were the *Chasidim*, with whom the comparison has been already made.

One distinct and most interesting people subsisted for ages amongst the Jewish race, though not originally Jews. They seemed lost to history for a long period, and would have been deemed extinct, but for the appeal of the last of the greater prophets just before the Captivity, to their beautiful constancy of principle, maintained in every fortune, down to that luring hour of Judah's peril. We refer to the descendants of Rechab the Midian, who, being kindred of the great Hebrew legislator, joined him in the wilderness, and became adopted guests of the nation. These Rechabites relinquished not the early vows of their ancestors; and we may well presume, from the manner of the allusion to them by Jeremiah, that to their consistent adherence to these peculiarities, they added the higher praise of fidelity to the whole of the divine statutes. In modest seclusion, rarely taking part in public affairs, this little community melted not away, but multiplied in the land, and held on their humble course of duty as patriots, and of adherence to the precepts of divine truth. Were these Rechabites the people who, after the Captivity, planned a more abstracted mode of life and discipli-

withdrew to the lonely margin of the Dead Sea, in order to realize a dreamy existence? But the possibility of this seems at once precluded, by the practical and active character of the Rechabite community. They were not visionaries. They were not fanatics. They affected not a course of life dissociated from the active duties of society. If they were abstinent in one particular, if in all things temperate, they were attached to their homes, and to the interests of those around them, and held as highest privilege the opportunities of frequent access to the holy city and the temple of their God. They were a simple, grateful people, who loved the welfare of Israel; and a withdrawal to the selfish asceticism of the desert would be utterly foreign to the social and benevolent character of their history. We have no intention of engaging the reader's attention with the like discussion regarding other sects, supposed to hold some possible relation to the Essenes. But the singular interest attaching to the story of the Rechabite family in the annals of the Israelites, has tempted us to set their character before the reader, as a picture, not resembling, but in beautiful and instructive contrast, alike to the useless seclusion of the Essene and the besotted superstition of the Pharisee.

To one or two other sects or people, referred to by authors as probable sources of Jewish Monasticism, we shall simply allude, without detailing those conclusive reasons, in regard to all of them very obvious, which make against the idea of such a descent. It has been asked, if they were a people of *Nazarites*, pledged to more accumulated vows and to a lonelier existence—if they were a *Samaritan* people, who, bereft of their temple on mount Gerizim, and barred from access to Jerusalem, sought to surpass their rivals the Jews, by a higher religious culture in the desert—finally, if the Essenes were a sect of *Jewish Astronomers*, withdrawn to study, in the midnight solitudes of the desert, the aspects of the heavens and the meanings of the constellations. To all these ingenious guesses we reply, that deeply as some of them may have engaged the curiosity, or rather the imagination of antiquarians, there is no shadow of evidence, either in the analogy of principles, or in the allusions of history, which would warrant us in identifying the Essenes with either of the communities now successively adverted to.

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The first indubitable allusions to this sect occur in the writings of Josephus,\* where the Essenes are spoken of as a sect contemporary with the Pharisees and Sadducees. Thus the point of their first emerging to notice would be in the time of the Asmonean princes, about 150 years before Christ. But they are then spoken of as an existing sect. Whether, however, we are to take the words of Josephus in their strict import seems to us doubtful. The mention of them is so abrupt, and seems so unconnected with the current of his narrative, that it wears much the appearance of a statement inserted at random, and not introduced from any clear conviction in his own mind as to the time when any one of the sects he alludes to rose to existence. No reference is made to the *origin* of the Essenes; none to their course of life in the period of which he writes. In his later references, he touches on incidents connected with individual Essenes, and enters at large into a description of their mode of life and peculiar opinions. In lieu, however, of more ample information, we must accept the brief and barren reference he gives us, and place the time of their origin at some point not long after the wars of the Maccabees. If the Essenes rose to existence as a sect in this period, we may suggest the probability that they were a society first formed in the desert by the severe exigencies of the times, and afterwards organized and perpetuated by choice and design. It is conceivable that in the desolation of their country under Antiochus, and the suspension of the temple service, some portion of the devout Jews withdrew to the fastnesses in the wilderness around the Dead Sea, and then first adopted a life of indispensable toil, and maintained in lonely caverns the worship of Jehovah. The life thus forced on them by circumstances, they did not relinquish when the victories of Judas Maccabæus had restored peace and liberty to their country. They became reconciled to the absence of the religious rites of the temple, and learnt to discipline their thoughts to meditation and prayer, without sacrifice, and without a priesthood. Thus compelled, at first by the cruelties of Antiochus, or it may be some oppressor much later in history, to seek, in the sequestered region around the Salt Lake, a retreat where they could be secure from the tyrant's reach, and could pursue unmolested the study of the Scriptures, use

\* Antiq. xiii. v. 9.



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gave a charm to what hard necessity had enforced. They did not at first, probably, plan the whole system of their future life; but having once committed themselves to the hardships of their experiment, the chief among them sought to give organization to their numbers, and to allure, by the image of an abstracted devotion, any from among their countrymen who had grown weary of the struggles of their own land. For many, in that eastern climate, this new idea would have its attractions. In progress of time, the ranks of the first monastics would be recruited by exiles from Judea, from Alexandria, and from towns in Syria and Asia Minor, for whom the retreat of the Essenes afforded a welcome and safe asylum.

### GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE ESSENE LIFE.

The Essenes are said to have resembled the Pythagoreans in their principles and discipline. Some general features of resemblance may certainly be detected; but there is no evidence that the Jewish anchorites copied their system of life from that instituted by the father of philosophy in Magna Grecia. It would be more natural to derive both from a source further east than Palestine, than to refer the Jewish system to an imitation of the Pythagorean. The Jews of Syria had probably no very intimate acquaintance with the principles of a sect which flourished at a much earlier period on the shores of southern Italy. Still, resemblances do exist between the two systems; but they are resemblances which sprang *from the common aim prosecuted in each*, that of abstraction of thought to inward contemplation and the subjugation of the passions. The means adopted in each were much the same. Both systems imposed habitual silence. Both enjoined meditation. The Pythagorean, as well as the Essene, enjoined self-denial. But here the resemblance ceases. We hear not that the Pythagoreans withdrew wholly from society, or that they shunned all intercourse with the world, by fixing themselves in a distinct and inaccessible locality. But *this is the capital feature in the Essene system*. Their seclusion, their anchorite life, was the basis of their organization, in which they are distinguished, not only from the Pythagoreans, but also from the oriental sects, whose life of musing and penance is supposed to have given to Europe the tendencies to monasticism. The Brahmins and Fakirs of India cultivated a solitary

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life as individuals, but we have no account that they formed themselves into *communities dwelling in a separate locality*, remote from the mass of the people.

Of the Essenes we are to note, that the aim of their system being a moral discipline by the mortification of the passions, their peculiar character, as a Jewish sect, is to be sought in their *manner of life* rather than in their opinions, though these are not without their essential importance. The Pharisees and Sadducees force themselves on our notice as sects of hostile belief. Their bitter contests, their bigotry, their zeal, especially that of the Pharisees, to proselyte to opinions, are prominent, rather than any severe practical discipline. The practical discipline of the Pharisee, as such, was not moral, but ceremonial. It consisted, not in direct efforts to free the will from its bondage to the passions, by mortifying the flesh, but in an endless ritual, which could exert no strictly moral influence, whilst it consoled the mind by a semblance of well-doing. As for the Sadducees, they made no pretence to a life-discipline of either kind, moral or ceremonial. They became a sect of worldly, self-indulgent sceptics. But the Essenes present to us a community, however mistaken in the means, noble in the aim they prosecuted. That aim was not to shelter self-indulgence under the veil of ritualism, nor to soothe conscience by superstitions which prompted to no moral effort, but was designed to atone for the want of it. Their aim was to elevate the soul above sensible influences, by a discipline which bore directly, as they imagined, on the seat and centre of evil. Their mistake lay in the extreme violence of the process, involving, as it did, the neglect of social duty, and the destruction of momentary free volition under the iron rule of a monastic abstinence. In a word, monasticism, as a means, is an inversion of the process of moral discipline. It begins where it should end; it ends where it should begin. A right moral discipline can only legitimately commence at the free volitions of the will. Volition, however, is not free, but forced, if the means, the instruments, the possibilities, of indulgence are cut off. Monasticism begins with the action, and ends with the will. The first it seeks to preclude even in possibility, the last it deprives of free alternative, and the moral element is excluded from both. The gospel alone evinces a perfect knowledge of the ways of the heart, and of

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the process of its purification. It extricates the will from the entanglements of sense by the attraction of higher regards. It imparts the knowledge of the love of Christ, which inspires a hatred of sin, and invigorates the will, even when encompassed with evil, to assume a loftier supremacy, by the disdain and rebuke of sinful indulgence. But we must return to the Essenes, to whose monastic rule the remarks we have just made apply not more than to the monastic systems and superstitions of later times.

### THE RELIGIOUS OPINIONS OF THE ESSENES.

We have said that the characteristic element in the Essenes was their practical discipline. As, however, these Jews of the desert maintained very decided forms of religious belief, we must not neglect altogether this part of their history. After touching on the chief articles of their faith, we shall dwell more fully on their organization and habits as a monastic community.

On the questions of Free-will and Fate—those problems which have allured the thoughts of men in all ages, and not least the men of the early time of the world—the Essenes held the same views as the Pharisees. They believed in a fate, or divine decrees, which left nothing unforeseen or really contingent; and yet they believed also in the perfect, responsible freedom of man, as a moral agent. Whether they revolved these questions very deeply, or exhausted the force of their minds, in the long intervals of imposed silence, in reaching after the solution of their harmony and co-existent truth, we have no means of knowing. As their system prohibited frequent conversation, and still more any free debate, it is just possible that their speculations on these high themes languished for want of excitement, and floated in vacant musings, like the scarce visible forms of cloud which would be sometimes seen to slumber on the distant horizon of their glowing sky.

They received, with implicit reverence, all the books of sacred Scripture then promulged. They revered in the highest degree the character of Moses; but they devoted themselves with most earnestness and delight to the study of the prophets, whose writings they were wont to expound in an allegorical manner. Yet they treated not as allegory or myth

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the doctrine of angelic existences. They believed in their former appearances, not as illusions, but as the manifestations of actual beings under assumed forms; and though these manifestations had ceased, or become infrequent, they believed angels to be yet not estranged from the human race, but to be still active in their invisible ministrations in behalf of God's servants. They held, with no less earnestness, the immateriality and immortality of the soul, and the certainty of future rewards and punishments.

That they received tradition on the same footing as the sacred writings, there is no evidence. Their practice would seem to show that they differed much in these respects from the Pharisees, at least in religious ceremonial; for they but rarely visited the temple, or joined in sacrifice, or in the festivals of their nation. But yet they were diligent students of the commentaries of the ancients upon the sacred writings, perhaps restricting their regard to such as inculcated the higher truths of revelation, in contradistinction from those which contained expositions on the minutiae of ceremonial observance. Of the Sabbath they were most scrupulously reverent. They refrained absolutely from all labour on that day, even from the most trifling household duties. More than this; on the sacred day of rest, they abstained wholly from food. The day was devoted, from before sunrise to the recital of prayer, to the worship of the synagogue, to the reading of the law, and to holy meditation.

If the character given of them by Josephus and others is to be depended on, the Essenes were an eminently sincere and devout people. They strove in earnestness of spirit, and not merely in outward forms, to worship God, to seek in every act and thought his approval, and to cherish a holy fear of his displeasure. They sought, in daily efforts of thought, to contemplate his character, and committed themselves in humble resignation to his disposal. Their devotion, as compared with the Pharisees, except the sincere few among them, was an inward element or principle, such as may warrant the belief that many of the Essenes were truly pious men, serving God after the tradition of the fathers.

In the principles of self-government, they practised the greatest rigour; or rather, as the reader is aware, they went beyond mere self-government, by seeking

of the feelings which demand restraint. They did not abstain from the simple fare which the fruits of the field and agriculture afforded, but they took these sparingly; and everything beyond, every indulgence in wine or animal food, was prohibited. In only one of their lower grades was marriage allowed; all the rest practised celibacy. Their numbers were recruited from abroad. To recur to the allusion of Pliny on this phenomenon in their life, they were the only community then heard of, which marriage did not multiply, which death did not diminish, but which flourished, by an invisible growth, like the lofty palms, of which they were the companions.

Their numbers in the time of Josephus were reckoned at about 4000; no very large fraternity, but yet held in high regard by their countrymen, in consideration of their fidelity to the Scriptures, their habits of endurance, their indomitable courage, and, above all, their compact union. That union was intimate and indissoluble. They felt for and treated one another as brethren. Nevertheless, they were distributed into classes, four in number, according to their period of residence, their stricter asceticism, their learning, and perhaps their original rank and present sacrifices. So strictly were the distinctions of these grades observed, that the higher felt it a defilement to be even touched by any one of the lower. The rights of all, however, were equal and common, and their fare the same. They all spent the day sedulously in toil, excepting the intervals allotted to devotion, and to their morning and evening meals. They laboured without intermission in the fields, or practised some handicraft familiar to them before their admittance into the society. The produce of their labour was common, whether in substance or money. None might appropriate the results of his own toils; none might alienate any portion of the common treasure, even to aid his indigent kindred.

But to the wandering exile and the poor who might visit them, they might bounteously dispense their stores. The outcast and the wretched they uniformly received with kindness and hospitality. On the like hospitality from others they solely depended when any of them quitted their retreats, and whether on some personal errand, or commissioned by their brethren, had to revisit the capital, or any other part of Judea or Galilee. They were not allowed to carry scrip or purse.

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They might bear arms for their own defence; but for their subsistence they trusted to the alms of the stranger.

We have to add some other peculiarities, in order to fill up our sketch of this singular people. One of these was their scrupulous dread of swearing. They were on their guard against all modes of adjuration, direct and indirect, and against the most distant invocation of the sacred name. Such, at least, is the assertion of Josephus, though in this he is not quite consistent, as he mentions that the admission into the fraternity was by the imposition of the most awful oaths. Passing by this, we may mention that the Essenes were studious of truth in act and speech, and cultivated calmness of spirit, being equally on their guard against giving provocation and against manifesting resentment. One particular more—and that redounding highly to their honour—is to be remarked of the Essenes: they held in abhorrence slavery, in all its forms and modifications. When every people in Asia and in Europe allowed slavery and the traffic in human beings; when so vast a proportion of the intellect, and, perhaps, social worth of humanity, in Greece and Italy, was depressed to the humiliated and hopeless lot of the slave; and when their own countrymen, the Jews, had practised slavery in regard to foreigners; the Essenes set the example, probably the first in history, of rejecting the very thought of it.

### THE ESSENES NOT A CHRISTIAN SECT.

We seem, in the enumeration of some of these particulars, to be giving an account of some band of early Christians, rather than of a taciturn, monastic Jewish sect; and the suspicion has arisen more than once in the course of our inquiries respecting this people, that Josephus, in his account of them, must have coloured and exaggerated greatly, and have borrowed many points in his description from a perusal of parts of the New Testament. Nor has it seemed impossible that Pliny and Philo might have mistaken some community of Nazarene Christians for a sect of much earlier origin. More than this, we find that some of the Christian fathers in the fourth century actually profess the same suspicion; or rather, they conclude boldly against the existence of the Essenes as a Jewish sect. They thought they saw evidence, in many of the principles ascribed to them by Josephus, that

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the people he described were a Christian society exiled to the desert, and retaining, along with the moral maxims and doctrines of the new faith of Jesus, a strong national partiality as Jews in favour of their ancient writings. Their disuse of many ceremonial observances, and their infrequent resort to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice, would suggest an inference in the same direction. Their fraternal union, their community of goods, their grace before and after meals, their study of the Scriptures, but still more peculiarly their travelling without scrip or purse, their rejection of oaths and abhorrence of slavery, seemed to make out a strong case in favour of their Christian origin. We may mention further, that these doubts, as to the Essenes having been an ancient Jewish sect, have been revived by a popular writer in our own day, and the theory of their christian character ingeniously defended.

But let us examine this matter a little more closely. In the first place, we think it pretty evident that Josephus, in his account of the Essenes, *has* borrowed something from the maxims of the New Testament. In the pages of this historian we are startled, every now and then, by modes of expression which betray his cognizance of Christianity, while he is careful to suppress all direct allusion to its principles. We put out of the account the celebrated passage in which the character of Christ is given, but which very few scholars consider as genuine. We refer to minute touches of allusion, occurring involuntarily in his writings, which denote his familiarity with the principles of the new sect which grew up in his day. We think, therefore, that a tinge derived from this source gives colouring to his description of the Essenes. We remark, in the next place, that while there are some points of striking resemblance between the Essenes and the Christians, they are resemblances not difficult to account for; while there are dissimilarities innumerable and fundamental, which are utterly fatal to the notion of their identity. The Essenes had all things in common: what then? Was this so extraordinary in the desert, where all had to toil for subsistence, and their indigence and loneliness compelled union and sympathy? They were alienated from the Temple services. But this also was possible to those who were so isolated, without supposing the infusion of Christian teaching. They repu-

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diated oaths; but the value of this resemblance is neutralized by the fact that they imposed on novitiates oaths of direct imprecation. But mark, on the other hand, how total the absence, among the Essenes, of everything *distinctively Christian*! No mention even of the name of Christ; no breaking of bread in memory of his death; no allusion to the way of salvation by him; no earnest hope of his second coming; no anticipation of future glory, in the visions so familiar to the Christian converts of that day, who had listened to the instructions of the apostles, or had witnessed their martyrdom; not a single trace of allusion to these servants of Jesus, who, if the Essenes had been a sect of Christians early degenerated, would have had some hold on their memory, if not on their affections; and, finally, what trace have we that this people kept the first day of the week as a day of rest and worship, in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus?—a circumstance which, had it existed, could scarcely have escaped the attention of Josephus, or failed of some passing reference in his narrative.

To show how different must have been the historian's barest account of the Essene sect, had they been, as Epiphanius and others have asserted, Nazarene Christians, we may refer to the younger Pliny's brief outline of the Christian sect, drawn from mere hearsay, and although most general, yet comprising points of capital moment as a description of Christianity. "I hear nothing worse of them," says he, in his letter to Trajan, "than that they are wont to meet together on a *stated day* (evidently the Lord's day), and sing among themselves alternately to *Christ as a God*, and bind themselves by an oath not to be guilty of any wickedness."

We will mention one circumstance more, which we think the reader will admit to be decisive in this argument, and that is, that monasticism, which is the grand feature in the Essene life, had not, in the times of Josephus and Philo, nor till more than a century after, become developed in the Christian church. The New Testament gave no sanction, nor impulse, to monasticism. The apostles of Christ were not ascetics, nor the founders of ascetic societies. Here, then, in the fact that the tendencies to monasticism in Christian communities had then no existence, we have the direct proof that Essenes were Christians, even if we<sup>1</sup>



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testimony of history, that the origin of the sect was long anterior to the Christian era. There was, it is true, a branch of the Jewish Christian church, which, long after the death of the apostles, assumed a separate form. These Nazarenes were enthusiasts for their ancient institutions, at the same time that they retained the chief doctrines of Christianity. But these never became monastics, and their separation from the rest of the Christian church was posterior to the times of which Josephus writes. They soon dwindled as a party, and finally disappear from history.

If, then, monasticism in Christianity was an element of much posterior development, we must recur to the Essenes as an ancient sect of Jewish monastics. Josephus drew not from invention the picture of a life of solitude and devotion, of which, if the Essenes had no existence, there had been no example since the world began. His testimony is positive as to their ancient date, their principles, and habits of life; and, further, as to their continuance to his own time. This testimony is corroborated by Philo and Pliny. Josephus in early life had visited these Essenes, and made experiment for a short period of their discipline. He mentions, further, the notorious fact, that the Essenes of the desert sustained their part nobly in the last struggle of their country against the Roman yoke, and, after signal displays of valour, no less than of constancy under torture, perished around the fastnesses and outposts of the regions they had cultivated.

With these positive notices of history before us, it may seem absurd to have devoted the few remarks we have offered to the refutation of the notion suggested by Epiphanius and others. But the fact of such a theory having been affirmed in the fourth century, and reproduced in later writings, rendered it indispensable fairly to meet its assumptions, and to show their fallacy. It might seem easy, moreover, to impeach the authority of the Jewish historian, though we doubt not that with occasional inaccuracies, if not something more, in details, he is entirely trustworthy in his main narrative, especially when it embraces events too notorious in his own times to have been safely misrepresented. Besides, we admit that a vague suspicion of the possible identity of the Essenes with some Christian enthusiasts does force itself on the mind when the first glance is taken of the principles of the former.

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We have shown that such suspicion arises only from an imperfect parallel of Essenism with Christianity; that the resemblances between them are few and casual, the dissimilarities wide and fundamental; that monasticism, the chief peculiarity in Essenism, was wholly absent from Christianity for two centuries; that the doctrines which centre in Christ, as the Son of God, have neither vestige nor allusion in Essenism; and finally, that as Josephus must have drawn from reality, and could not easily have invented the scenes he describes, his testimony, sustained by the assent of his own times, and directly corroborated by Philo and Pliny, must be allowed the full authority of historic truth.

### CHRISTIANITY NOT DERIVED FROM ESSENISM.

If we have satisfactorily disposed of the imagination that the Essenes were Christians, some of our readers may require us to prove that Christianity was not Essenism; for this also has been insinuated, though with a different design, and by a different party. Infidelity has attempted to confound Christianity with the Essene system, or, at least, to derive the former from the latter, and so to destroy the divine origin of our religion, by representing it as borrowed from the doctrines of the enthusiasts of the desert. They would represent the Baptist as an Essene, and the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth as derived, indirectly perhaps, from the same quarter. But we have no evidence—none in the New Testament, none from Josephus, none from Jewish tradition—that John, though long a recluse, was ever among the Essenes, or ever had cognizance of their life and maxims. Although, for a period, withdrawn from his family to devote himself to prayer and thought, under the secret direction of a heavenly impulse, we have no reason to conclude that his abstraction from society was for more than a brief period, or that he held not occasional communication with his friends. But, while in his seclusion, he was literally solitary. He sought not the haunts of the Essenes. That sect, while monastic, as separated from the habits of society, was, however, a numerous and busy fraternity of Jewish visionaries. But the forthcoming harbinger of the Son of God sought his preparation, not in the intercourse of enthusiasts, but in the lonely exercises of thought and prayer, in some retired nook, perhaps not distant from the P-

district, yet effectually divided from it by some mountain range. And the doctrines embodied in the proclamations of the sublime herald—what had they in common with the peculiarities of Essenism? He denounced iniquity; but never inculcated the desertion of social duties. He proclaimed repentance as a moral change; but he bid none seek it in the penance of desert hardships. He baptized penitents, and he proclaimed the coming of a brighter Luminary, before which his own light would wane and disappear! But what trace of all this have we in Essene doctrines? Not even Josephus insinuates for a moment the most distant affinity, much less connection, between the Baptist and the anchorites who dwelt in the farther desert. And if the gulph is thus wide between the history of the messenger of the Lord, and the fraternity of the Essenes, the separation of our Lord's life, and character, and doctrines, from the possibility of such relations is so absolute, and so obvious, that it were trifling with the reader's attention to do more than allude to the fact.

The whole life-time of our Lord, from his childhood to his baptism, and thence onward to his death, lies open in the sunlight of history. His youth, we are expressly informed, was spent in the shelter of home, and under the influences of parental tenderness and wisdom. This home he quitted not till he came forth to receive from John's hands his baptism, and his commission from the voice which broke over the waters of the Jordan, as he ascended from its stream. And the teachings on which he forthwith entered—how shall these, either in their moral principles, or in their doctrinal anticipations, be even compared, not to say confounded, with the mystical musings of the Essenes? There would be some points of coincidence in moral inculcations, as there could not fail to be, where the rules of morals are so obvious, and rather require motive and enforcement than subtle definition, except when they have to be rescued from gloss and perversion. But in the whole cast and character, and in the wide extent of the Saviour's teaching, and still further in the doctrines of a new way of acceptance with God, which centred in himself, and were by himself in part unfolded, the disparity and difference become absolutely enormous, and might well convict of folly any reference to the infidel suggestion which has given occasion to these remarks, except that the glance they have compelled us to cast

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to the divine teaching of the great coteremporaries of the Essenes, both the herald and his Lord, may not be an uninteresting episode in the narrative we have to offer of the highest effort of Jewish moral discipline on the shore of the Dead Sea.

We have now, we think, disposed of the only questions which could arise, affecting the existence and distinct character of the Essenes, and have to affirm their place in history, as an ancient Jewish sect of peculiar character, professing principles, some of them just and praiseworthy, but wholly mistaken in the discipline they adopted to free the will of man from the tendencies to evil. Yet it must be remembered, the experiment of the Essenes, in its commencement, long preceded Christianity. It was an experiment made by a number of enthusiastic and perhaps heart-wrung exile Jews, many of them truly devout, with the Old Testament in their hands, to train the mind by solitude, toil, and devotion to a pure and heavenly life. If they approached not the gentleness and purity of the Christian spirit, and could not combine enjoyment with self-government, or holy thought with the cheerfulness of social life; if the tendency of their discipline was to wear out the sensibilities of the heart, and to form the mind to an abstracted and austere asceticism; we must still remember that the Essenes made their experiment with no grovelling aim, and with a patience in suffering, self-denial, and silent thought, of which the world had then witnessed no similar example.

Having rescued the Essenes from the attempts made to resolve them into Christian anchorites; having rescued, we venture to add, with still more ample evidence, the origin of Christianity from being merged in Essenism; having cleared away, to the best of our power, the mists that threatened to spread over the very existence of the Essenes as an ancient sect, let us now turn our steps again to their abodes, and scrutinise somewhat more closely their way of life and habits. We will ask the reader to accompany us first in a brief outline of the wild locality in which they were situated, and afterwards in a nearer survey of their week-day life, and of their soul-entranced worshipping assemblies on the holy day of rest and hope.

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### THE ESSENE HOMES AND DAY-TASKS.

If the reader will turn to a map of Palestine, and glance over its physical outlines, he will remark, first, the central mountain chain which descends, with few interruptions, from north to south. This chain parts the waters of Palestine, sending its large rivers westward, through richest plains and valleys into the Mediterranean, and sending eastward some few torrents, of briefer course, through ravines and mountain passes, into the Dead Sea. On elevations, in this central district of Palestine, are situate many of its chief towns—Samaria, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron. The country towards the Mediterranean was once rich in vine-clad slopes and valleys, and arable plains, watered by numerous streams. But also on the eastern side of these central highlands, especially towards Jericho and the Jordan, there was much fertile territory, which was anciently marked by towns and villages, and occupied by a numerous population. And the outline of the country on this side is peculiar.

Let the reader glance again on the mountain formations which lie on the east of Palestine. He will see that these run off, not in single parallel lines eastward, terminating on the Jordan and the Dead Sea, but that they are semicircular formations, in which two lines join in curves at some distance short of the lake, leaving a considerable space between their heights and the margin below. On the side towards Jerusalem, these semicircular ranges enclose valleys, that were formerly richly cultivated. A traveller proceeding from the Holy City towards the Salt Lake, had still before him a scenery, not only of picturesque ascents and mountain passes, but of fertile glens and vales, towns and villages. But when in his advance he reached the summits of these ridges, and looked down on the district beyond, he would contemplate far other scenery. Or suppose him to have wound his path down the ravine of the Kedron, and to come out on the view of the desert, at a point midway between the two extremes of the lake, he will then find himself encompassed by desolation. If he turns round to the north, the desert shore is before him, the sea on his right, and on his left a line of dark precipices, pierced by caverns and divided by ravines. Pursuing his way up towards Engaddi, the same hopeless, horrid spectacle is around him.

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The dark mountain-passes, through which the winter-torrents, four in number, have forced their passage to the lake, alone diversify the scene. Near these passes, and in broken glens, are to be seen occasional patches of vegetation, but not till he advances towards Jericho, where groups of the lofty palm meet the eye, is the heart relieved, or the sense of loneliness broken.

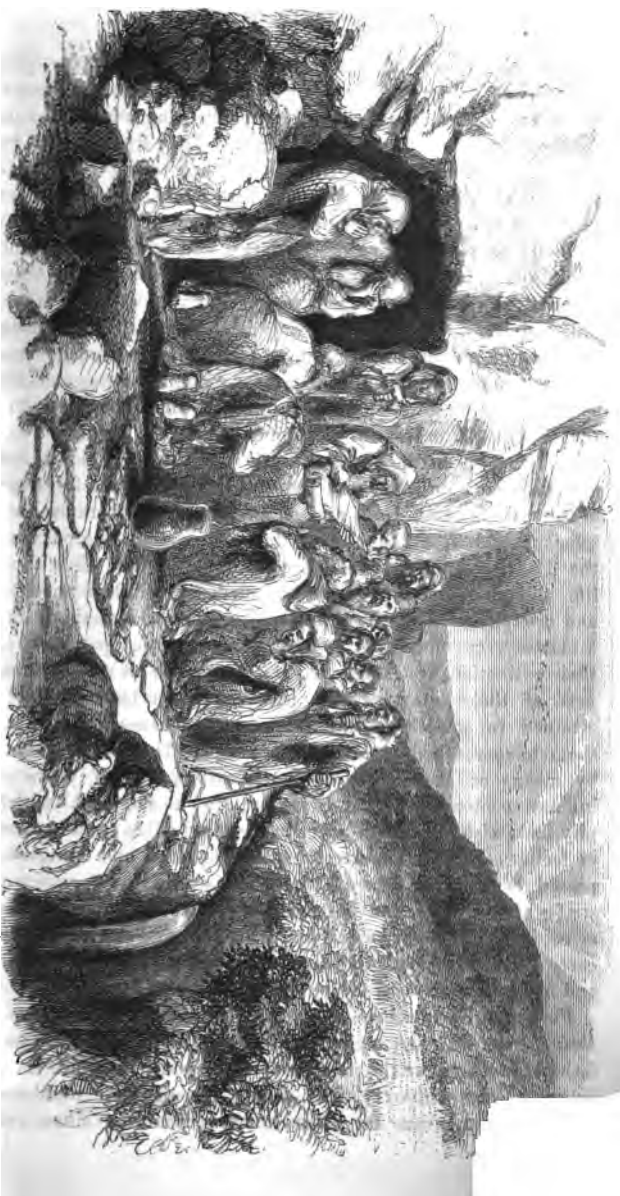
Down along the interval thus left betwixt the rocky eminences and the sea, lies the ancient desert of Judah. Commencing not far south of Jericho, and never at any point very wide, this stripe of sandy soil, interspersed here and there with rock, and occasional traces of vegetation, descends southward along the side of the lake for about fifty miles, and opens lower down, on the wider region of the Arabian sands. It was in this district, so little tempting to the invader, and so repelling and inaccessible to the traveller, that the Essenes took up their homes. Pliny's allusion to the palm trees as their companions, fixes the locality of at least a portion of them not far to the south of Jericho, whose palm groves in that age were celebrated. Others of them took up positions lower down, perhaps near the steep valleys or passes that open, where the torrents foam in winter, into the desert, and selected those spots which gave hope of scant sustenance by dint of hardest toil.

This district, if we are to follow the very general allusions of Josephus and Pliny, we are to imagine marked here and there with groups of dwellings, or small villages, built in rudest fashion, for mere shelter and convenience, with now and then, most probably, an oratory or synagogue. Some little spaces around have been reclaimed from the desert, and attest the daily task of the singular population by which they are occupied. That population consists wholly of men, except perhaps in one village, very distant from the rest, where a lower class of novitiates are accompanied by their wives and families. But further on, and through the chief extent of this province of desolation, you behold nothing but toil-worn men, engaged in the tasks of the field, or, before their dwellings, employed busily in some work or other. The people scattered before you, and through whose ranks you pass, exhibit the aspect of want and emaciation, but not of anguish or hopelessness. For written on their brow, or in the lines of

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countenances, are the traces of stern, of thoughtful, holy purpose. Still this expression is not one of despair, but of calmness; and the eye tells of lofty hope of a better existence in the eternity coming. Their dress is singular, but of uniform hue, except from varying age or service. They are all arrayed in a white garb, or what originally was so; for the same garb must be used, without wash or change, till it is worn to tatters—so their rules ordain—except in the hours of meals, or of worship, or on the Sabbath. They are early forth afield, before the gleam of day has broken eastward, or the rocky summits behind have caught the first rays of the sun; but not before they have assembled in prayer to the God of their fathers—prayer for their race and country, as well as for themselves—and prayer, too, most surely, for the advent of the Hope of Israel—of that Messiah, who even then was come, and was passing the years of his childhood, at the beginning of the last century of their history, in a small town some sixty miles distant from their abodes; and whose herald, the intrepid John, was now himself a recluse, dwelling in a quarter much nearer to them, but wholly unknown to their fraternity, and not yet conscious of the high ministry, as harbinger of Immanuel, to which he was destined!

Let us in thought approach the homes of this singular people. The scene before us is one of busy, instant, unceasing toil. They work singly, or in bands; not, it is true, as slaves toil, but with willing energy and perseverance, as peasants toil in the cheerful occupations of the field, except with this difference, which strikes the wayfaring gazer with a sense of solitude and awe, that *not a word is spoken*; no human voice is heard, unless it be at rarest intervals, and in briefest interchange of speech. This is the stern rule of the community. Silent, thoughtful, they go forth to their work. Scarcely, if their glance meet casually in their occupations, does it assume the meaning of cognizance or of feeling. Their work proceeds in self-imposed seclusion of thought, till now the intenser glow of the ascending orb, or the signal of trumpets, gives notice of the early meal. Silently they turn their faces to their common home, where, on arriving, each Essene betakes himself to the bath, and arrays himself in clean attire; after which they all assemble to partake of the scanty fare of the desert—some herbs, coarse bread, and water, or perchance some



MORNING WORSHIP AMONG THE ESSENES.

(pages 28, 29.)



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little milk. Words of thanksgiving are spoken by the presiding elder before the meal; but, without express permission, no word besides is uttered. The meal being ended, devout thanksgiving is again poured forth. They then meet for worship; and after this lay aside their clean garb, and re-assume the dress, now in tatters with many, which has been the companion of weary months and years of labour. They go forth again with recruited energy, and with feelings and thoughts re-animated by prayer and devout song, to their occupations; and, after many more hours of earnest, silent toil, end the day with the evening meal, and with the evening assembly of prayer, meditation, and the mingled harmony of chanted psalm, re-echoed from the far-reaching recesses of the caves around them. Thus, day by day, the whole period of the Essene life passes on, till age enfeebles, till sickness overtakes them, or till the hand of death is gently laid upon them, and they sink in their last peaceful slumber, in the full hope of acceptance with God, and of an immediate entrance into felicity; and in a vague hope too, which they shared with the Pharisees, of resurrection to a happier life. For their life, though secluded, is a life secluded for religious thought and discipline. They have striven to reach to something like a mastery, or more than a mastery, over sinful passions; to their extinction, or a stage near it; or even to an unconsciousness of their nature. And many of them have probably attained to something like this unconsciousness. Many of them have reached to an advanced age. They have passed, by means of abstinence, of mortification, and of years of intense contemplation and prayer, to a stage at which physical existence would seem to have bid adieu to the power of feeling, except the merest sense of thirst and hunger—passed beyond the access of passion, beyond the memory of strifes and wrongs, and beyond the recollection almost of the sweet images of home, of parents, of brothers and sisters, of their early loves, or of their forsaken wives and children, widowed and made orphans by a father's vow.

For these Essenes *are not natives of the locality which is now their home*. Their companions around them are not their fathers, brothers, or the friends of their youth; nor are they, in sooth, companions! This people recruit their numbers, year by year, from far other homes; from the cities and

villages of Palestine, and from countries much more remote. Haggard forms and faces may be recognised here, that might have been noticed, many years back, conspicuous in the temple, the sanhedrin, or the synagogue, or often in the busy throngs of the thoroughfares of Jerusalem. They were then in the pride and vigour of manhood. Here, too, may be seen more youthful faces. That thoughtful, earnest-looking youth of nineteen or twenty, is no other than the future historian of the Jews and of this anchorite sect itself—Josephus—who at this early period resolved, he tells us, to make trial of the elevating effect of the Essene discipline. Men are here, no longer perhaps in their strange garb and aspect to be recognised, who have come from Nazareth, and taken refuge here, in the time of the sanguinary Herod, and who may have gazed on the infancy of the Saviour of the world, though unknowing of the glory that dwelt under that form of serenest beauty. There are gathered here also, we may with certainty assume, some men who have spent their youth at Tarsus, or in other towns of Asia Minor, or at Alexandria, or Corinth, or who have trod the pavement of the Roman capital. From all ranks and conditions, and all countries whither Jews have wandered, exiles, enthusiasts, refugees, the hopeless and the hopeful, are come to this desert province, seeking a sequestered home, in which to fit themselves to die!

The Essene community, though silent and debarred from intercourse, as a general rule, were allowed freedom of speech at times, but never without the consent of not less than ten persons. They had fixed times of religious instruction and worship. The oracles of God were then read and expounded among them. They revolved the age of their patriarch fathers, and of the mighty deliverances in Egypt and the Red Sea, and the conquest of that land of promise, on the desert margin of which they had now selected their home. They recited in chant and chorus the inspired strains of Israel's bards; and they meditated, and had expounded to them, the glowing pictures of coming times given by their prophets. They are indeed said by Josephus to have had among them men who aspired to the prophetic function; and hence it has been supposed that the Essenes were, in truth, descendants of the *schools of the prophets*. But the age of the Captivity and its calamities, or even a still wider interval of the silence of

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history, lies as a deep gulph across the scene, in bar of this genealogy. Their teachers, receiving appointments from the president, discourse in allegory and parable; and, instead of the subtleties of philosophical inquiry, or the dialectics of the Grecian school, they select for their themes the angelic princelings of the unseen world, they kindle the imagination of their hearers with the vision of a future glory, and strengthen, by the marvels of the past, their hope in the covenant of God.

### THE ESSENE SABBATH.

Their Sabbath day is one of more intense and absolute seclusion; as if, in this sense of absorbing their feelings in religious contemplation, their whole existence had not been a constant Sabbath! No sound is heard this day, even of household tasks, in the most trifling instance. Not even is any food taken. The cessation from all earthly duties is absolute. Stillness, almost as of a city of tombs, or as that which reigns in Petra now, takes the place of sounds of husbandry and handicraft, so earnestly prosecuted till this last day of the week. This silence, except in the hour of worship and instruction, is complete, and oppresses the heart with awe. The sun in his course has stolen slowly over their habitation, has poured his glowing beams on their dwellings, and is gone westward, and the shadows of the precipices of Engaddi are flung forward on their cultured lands, while the voice of prayer alone, or of prophetic teaching, or the responses of the evening chant, have given indications of human existence in the desert, on this holy day of rest. Not that to the Essene its silence and seclusion have been a weariness. His heart has been cheered this day with new strength. His thoughts have taken a higher flight. The rest of the promised and better land seems almost entered on! His wearied frame enjoys respite from toil; and his imagination has been beguiled with more glowing pictures of a not distant glory!

### WORSHIP AMONG THE ESSENES NEAR THE KERDON.

We must not, however, quit this glimpse of an Essene Sabbath on the plains of the desert, without an attempt to place ourselves and our readers in nearer and more vivid communication with its worship-scenes. If it is silence on

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the shores of the lake—silence on the ploughed field, where the busy forms of white-garbed peasants were wont to be visible—and if silence reigns in the village dwellings—yet the day of rest is not without its occupation. At early dawn, a solemn gathering takes place near one of their cavern dwellings, and not far distant from the shore of the lake.

In the ravine, down which the Kedron rushes, the rocks on each side rise steep and high, and overhang the stream, till near the opening towards the lake, where they retire further asunder, and present something of an open valley. On the northern side are caves of vast amplitude and deep recess, in which sculptured traces are still to be seen, attesting that they had been occupied in some former age. We will assume the possibility that near one of these, the outermost, which nearly fronts to the east, and commands a view of the hills of Moab across the waters, the Essene fraternity were wont to assemble, perhaps from love of the stream which told them, as it rolled past, of the holy city whose foundations it had that morning laved, and the hum of whose life it seemed, to their home-sick fancy, to bear upon its babbling waters. To this retreat on the north side of the Kedron, then, let us follow, in imagination, these sojourners of the desert. It is the hour of morning worship, and the Jewish pilgrims, in Sabbath garb, are there. The slant beams of the sun are poured on the foaming torrent below, on the rocky heights above, and on the crowded assemblage whom we behold seated on ledges of rock near the cavern. In the centre, near its entrance, stands the aged presiding elder of the Essene church; and ranged on either side of him are the more distinguished of his brethren, venerable alike for their age, their piety, and their sufferings. We may but imagine the order or succession of their holy services, but it is not left to us to imagine only its Infinite Object—whose presence is there and everywhere; for we know they worshipped the true God! Nor is imagination needed to create for us those forms of thought and utterance which inflamed their spirits; for these forms, even to the very words they recited, are possessed by us; and perchance some old melody current now, and transmitted from the ancient church, may be a remnant, or even the entire strain of the chant which woke the echoes of the cave near the Kedron. After the prayer, earnestly responded to, and the reading of

## THE ESSENES.

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# THE SPIES:

OR,

THE LAND OF PROMISE SURVEYED,

WITH NOTICES OF

ITS ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS.



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There are, indeed, certain physical features which are permanent and invariable. What Palestine, in its hills, valleys, and natural products, is now, that was it when its soil was trodden by patriarchal feet. But its cities, towns, inhabitants, and institutions, have undergone change every century, from the earliest historical date down to the present day. Consequently, Palestine, as it was when invaded by Joshua, wore features different to those which it afterwards wore; and if we would know what opposition the invaders

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## MONASTICS OF THE DESERT.

no doubt, in their fraternity, as in subsequent ones formed by Christian enthusiasts, many exceptions, both on the score of devout sincerity of feeling, and the interest and content maintained in a life of continuous solitude and toil. The picture so graphically sketched by the historian of the "Decline and Fall," of the schools of the Anchorite Christians, would doubtless apply no less to these earlier experiments made by sharers of the same humanity on the shores of the Dead Sea. There was often an oppressive sense of disappointment and despair concealed under that aspect of serenity and meditation, which these Jewish anchorites assumed in each other's presence. There were many, whether in their week-day labour, or on the Sabbath, who found that toil could not charm the restlessness of thought, nor seclusion heal the bleeding wounds of the heart, nor silence stifle the feeling of hardship and misery. The control of the imagination required far other power than that of self-imposed restraint on speech. The memory of home and of its once happy circle, the remembrance of the world's regard, or its wrongs, still exercised the thoughts and troubled the repose of the silent enthusiast. His life, with its high aim, was at times weary and woeful; and each day, to use the words of Gibbon, he had often to count the vacant hours, and glance his eye in hopelessness to the slowness of the sun's course.

## THE MARTYR FATE OF THE ESSENES.

These remarks, our limits warn us, must come to a close. We will only add a few sentences on the noble character of the Essenes as patriots, and on their melancholy and martyr fate. Though withdrawn from life, they forgot not their country. Though seldom was an Essene to be descried in the throng of the worshippers in the temple, though rarely in Jerusalem was he seen, yet the Essenes were not apostates from the hope of their fathers, or indifferent to the welfare of their nation. They contributed bountifully to the treasure of the temple, though they joined not often in its sacrifices. They were prepared to uphold its worship, and to defend its sanctity with their lives. Though in the last scenes of the ruin of their country, they joined neither of the great parties or factions which first rent the Jewish community by dissensions, and then trampled upon its sufferings, the

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had to overcome, we must familiarise ourselves with the state of the land in the age of Joshua. Materials for such a purpose are by no means abundant. We can hope only to draw a picture true in its general outline and leading features.

In order to fix the point of time, and to follow the guidance of the Bible, we shall in thought join the company of the spies sent by Moses to survey the land. Yet, as there is some general information to be communicated, which regard to history will not allow us to suppose that they possessed, we shall, as a preliminary, ask our reader's attention to the following outline; and since, when we place ourselves by the side of our guides, we shall have to view the land in a direction running from south to north, so do we think it most conducive to a full acquaintance with Palestine, if in this summary we take a survey in a direction running from north to south.

We invite you then, gentle reader, to go hand in hand with us while we ascend, in the first instance, the southern extremity of Anti-Lebanon. Here we are on the summit of Mount Hermon. From this lofty position we will direct your attention to such facts as are likely to be serviceable in your historical studies. And, first, observe that we are here in the centre of ancient civilisation. Turn round, then, and direct your eyes northward. The country on which they fall is Syria, or, in a more limited sense, Coele or Hollow Syria, with Baalbec and Antioch for its chief cities, renowned alike for Aramæan, Greek, and Roman culture. Pursuing the line your eyes have taken, you come to the northern parts of Mesopotamia, or, as the Shemitic tribes named it, "the land between the two rivers"—that is, the Euphrates and the Tigris. Beyond, rise the mountains of Armenia—the western end of that lofty chain which runs through Asia from west to east, and in some sheltering vale of which the human race had its first and its second birth. If you will fancy yourself standing on some elevation there—looking still to the north, you have before you the vast territory of what is now called Russia; while on your right is the Caspian Sea, and on your left the Buxine, along whose shores of old, knowledge, power, and wealth distributed their gifts. Following the Buxine in a westerly direction, you are brought first to Greece, then to Italy, then to Gaul and

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Spain; and, passing the straits of Hercules, you may visit Britain as it lies in the Atlantic Ocean. Returning eastward, you coast along the once populous shores of northern Africa, until you come to Egypt, first the cradle and then the crown of civilisation.

Arrived here, you are on the borders of Palestine, and might easily resume your position on Mount Hermon. Before you do so, cast a thought on that small peninsula which rises with its wastes, its summits, and its peaks, immediately on your right hand: that is the Sinai of the Bible, for ever celebrated for its association with the forty years' sojourn of the children of Israel. But Sinai is only the north-western corner of the large peninsula of Arabia, the western and southern parts of which have from the earliest times been rich in great men, as well as in vegetable and mineral products. Arabia, on its north-eastern side, is bounded by southern Mesopotamia, another primeval storehouse of knowledge and culture. Thence your mind may readily proceed eastwardly through Persia to the Indies and the Ganges, and reach the utmost limits of ancient civilisation in Ceylon and China.

Having taken this general survey, consult a map of the world as known to the ancients, and judge whether Judea be not the centre of the civilised world. What are the chief seats of culture? Are they not Armenia on the north; Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy on the west; on the east, Assyria; on the south, Arabia; on the south-west, Egypt? And does not Palestine lie in the very centre of these celebrated spots? Thus lying, Palestine was wondrously fitted to be the recipient of a revelation designed to cover the earth. Of old, the rivers and the seas were the channels of culture. In Syria, you are near all the chief seas of the eastern hemisphere; and what rivers so renowned in history as the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Nile, which flank the land. Take a city in Syria as your centre; say Damascus. Then you can communicate with the remote east by means of Babylon and the Persian Gulf, with the remote south by means of the Nile, and with the remote west by means of the Mediterranean. If, then, God wished to pour his word upon the world in its length and breadth, what spots more suitable than Sinai and Bethlehem? The seed, broad-cast over Palestine, would be carried by the breezes and the waters, as

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carried they were, to all quarters of the ancient world ; and the kingdom of Jehovah, established there on the hills of Judah, would stretch the sceptre of its authority alike to the iales of the west, the vales of the south, the highlands of the north, and the wide and luxuriant plains of the east.

### THE ORIGINAL SETTLERS IN PALESTINE.

The children of men after the flood, resuming their strength and regaining their numbers, journeyed from the vicinity of Ararat in Armenia, in a southerly direction, and so came into the wide plains of Shinar, or the southern districts of Mesopotamia. Thence, distributing themselves in course of time, one part travelled eastward, one southward, and the third southward and westward. The last, appearing to our historical authorities as powerful and distinguished, received the honourable title of "men of name," or Shemites. From the Shemitic trunk there sprang several branches. Of these, the Arabs occupied the Arabian peninsula ; and the descendants of Terah spread from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean. This migration took place in successive waves, the distinguishing lines of which are now almost effaced. One wave, however, may be recognised in the Hyksos, or Syrian shepherds, who subdued Egypt, and long held possession of the land of the Nile. Another stands out prominent in the dawn of post-diluvian civilisation, and may be accounted the chief source of our modern culture. We allude to Abraham and the Hebrews, his descendants, whence came Christ, the Saviour of the world. Minor waves, perhaps before, certainly between and after, these, went forward in a south-western line, and found a settlement in Palestine.

These successive swarms were attracted by the flowery abundance of south-western lands. Egypt, with all her riches and glory, offered a special attraction. Palestine, too—as we shall presently see—was a country to allure and reward the immigrant. Pressing forward in their quest of a "better land," the migratory hordes now settled in Palestine, now went down into Egypt, and now were driven back from Egypt into Palestine. These tribes, from the rude north or the barren east, fell as hungry wolves fall on their prey, when they at length reached the vale of the Jordan and the vale of the Nile. Having no consciousness of their common

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origin, and each selfishly seeking its own advantage, the swarms, when they pitched to gather the honey, often made war on each other, and scarcely ceased until the stronger had exterminated the weaker. The conflicts took place for the most part in Palestine; for Palestine was the limit of their migrations, and the general gathering-place. Of some of these conflicts, only a few faint traces remain on the page of history; but their effects are clearly visible in the divisions and subdivisions of Palestine, in the days of Moses.

While these tribes had a common origin, and in consequence had a common language, they came from different localities, bore different names, and varied in hue as their birth-places varied. Those of the north were of a lighter complexion, while those of the southern regions were of a darker complexion. The extreme of this diversity was found in those Hamites, who, sprung from their hot-blooded and deep-coloured progenitor Ham, peopled Canaan under the several designations of "Sidon the first-born of Canaan," and Heth (the Hittites), and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgasite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. These were "the families of the Canaanites."\*

Anterior to these, however, there were\*aboriginal settlers, whether immigrants or antochthones it is difficult to say. Unquestionably, in the days of Abraham, the confederation of Syrians and Assyrians which made war on the Sodomites, found in Canaan, and defeated, the Rephaims, the Zuzims, and the Emims, as well as the Amalekites and Horites. To these very early inhabitants may be added the Zumzummim, and the septs or clans of the vale of Siddim. The time or even the order of these settlements cannot be indicated.† The older races, seen through the haze of many generations, assumed gigantic proportions, and had doubtless withstood the new broods of incomers with heroic valour. Yet such was the pressure which drove forward the successive hosts, that the older dwellers in the land were ever obliged to give way; they either allowed the stranger to settle in their midst or in their vicinity, or they themselves contracted their territory, or withdrew to the sea-board or some mountainous district. Any way, the land became full to overflowing; and

\* Gen. x. 15—18.

† Gen. xiv.



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so some of the population pressed down into Egypt, or passed over to the islands of the Great Sea; and when pasturage and tillage afforded insufficient supplies of food, those who had fixed themselves on the coast had recourse to commerce. Thus, from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean, and from Ur of the Chaldees to Beersheba, there spread out Shemitic populations, who were ever moving from north to south, and from east to west, and as they moved, came constantly into collision and conflict. To themselves they appeared so many different nations; yet had they a common origin, and, in substance, a common language.

Two of these immigrations are distinctly marked in the Bible; that which was led by Abraham, and that which was led by Joshua. The former, peaceful at the outset, was afterwards compelled to appeal to force. "The father of the faithful" vanquished a confederacy of north-eastern invaders, who had defeated the dominant powers of the country; and thus he acquired possession of Canaan by the right of conquest. It is desirable to add, that the successful enterprise was prompted, not by the lust of ambition, but by the necessity of self-defence.\* The immigration under Joshua was a renewal of the rights acquired by Abraham, and a resumption of the territories of which he had made himself master. This second recorded immigration, however, was effected by force.

### GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF CANAAN.

You are now prepared to look a little more closely on the land, the peopling of which we have thus described. It is called Canaan. Canaan, employed as a general name, is the oldest designation,† and signifies a sinking or depression; and so Canaan somewhat resembles our modern terms, "the Lowlands," and "the Netherlands." This you, from this lofty eminence of Hermon, will readily understand; for there below your feet lies Canaan. The tribes immigrating from the highlands of northern Mesopotamia, saw these "low countries," as they here drew near the sea, and gave them a name agreeable to their own impressions. That name at first applied to the whole land defined by limits imposed by nature herself: on the west, the Mediterranean Sea; on the east, the

\* Gen. xiv. 13.

† Gen. xii. 5; xvi. 3.

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Jordan; on the south, the wilderness; and here on the north, this huge mountain mass of Lebanon.

With a somewhat wider view, you may comprise in the natural boundaries of Canaan the range of table-lands which run from this spot to and beyond the Dead Sea; and when you are told that the wide countries which lie between the Jordan and the Euphrates are mostly desert, and remember that Abraham brought with him some kind of claim from those Mesopotamian districts where he was born, and where his family continued to dwell, you will not be disinclined to extend what in a free sense may be termed the natural limits of Canaan, from the sea (the Mediterranean) to the river (the Euphrates). Such was the land which God gave to Abraham and to his seed after him.\*

But the title Canaan also denoted two separate districts, namely, the vale of the Jordan, and the sea-board on the west side of Lebanon. With special peculiarity were these called "Canaan," or lowlands. The Jordan vale lies—as you will presently learn—deep sunk in the body of the land; and the sea-board is, as usual, low. The rank luxuriance of the vegetation of the Jordan attracted the earliest immigrants, and rivetted their feet to its fat and prolific soil. This was their Canaan, and so to these fertile valleys and plains was the name first given. When, however, in the progress of events, the immigrants from the north and east settled along the strip of land which separates Lebanon from the sea, the name was given to the newly-acquired home, and that with such propriety and force that, while the whole land exchanged the name of Canaan for more modern designations, this strip retained its original appellation, which found acknowledgment and use in the Egyptian *Kna*, and the Greek *Phœnix*, or Phœnicia. In this name Phœnix, and in the general designation Ham, we have an intimation of the complexion of the Canaanites. Both words signify a somewhat deep colour, the result of heat; Ham the darker, Phœnix the lighter; the former, therefore, denoting a deep and ashy brown, the latter a light or brightish brown; and these are the hues in which the Canaanites appear on the Egyptian monuments.†

\* Gen. xv. 18, seq.

† See Osburn's "Ancient Egypt," plate p. 125; also Osburn's "Monumental History of Egypt," vol. ii. p. 87, plate. A distinction similar to that noticed

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The land which lies below divides itself into four parallel lines. Immediately before us is the first line, or the land beyond Jordan, called in later days by the Greek name of *Peræa*. The second line is that of the Jordan, comprising the water-course of Canaan. Then come the broken uplands which form the body of the western moiety; and, lastly, the sea-coast extending from Sidon to Gerar. The general form and skeleton of the country are determined by the mountains on which we stand. These appear originally to have run with a general sameness of level from the heights of Lebanon to the heights of Sinai. By volcanic action, however, great inequalities were produced. Convulsions arising from internal causes, operating with tremendous forces and on a vast scale, broke the continuous masses, here heaving up peaks, there causing deep depressions, sundering one mass from another, opening valleys and water-courses in every direction, and throwing abroad wide and lovely plains. Lebanon itself was split into parallel ranges, with the Leontes on the south, and the Orontes on the north, forming one of the richest and finest vales in the world, and opening a great highway into Canaan before the feet of the immigrants from the north. Of these ranges, the eastern is the trunk whence spring the branches that form Palestine.

A spur running just below us gives rise to a succession of high-lands, which, divided into rich *plateaux* by the rivers Jarmuk, Jabok, and Arnon, and successively named Bashan, Gilead, and Edom (Mount Seir), extend southwardly\* to the eastern arm of the Red Sea. Here, in a direction running from the north, were settled the aboriginal clans, the Hama-thites, the Rephaim, the Zuzim, the Emim, and the Horites; and here Moses planted the two and a half tribes of Israel, namely, Manasseh, Gad, and Reuben. The whole district, once rich in men and natural produce, was eminently fit for pastoral purposes, and consequently a precious possession for invading tribes, whom remotest tradition had stamped with the title of "shepherds."

in the text is mentioned by Strabo, and has been observed by travellers among the present inhabitants of Palestine. There is reason to believe that the complexion of our Lord was of the lighter kind, resembling that of the Leucosyrians or White Syrians of Strabo (xii. 544) that is, the Cappadocians.

\* With an average elevation of 2000 feet above the ocean.

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Another spur, running from the western flank of Anti-Lebanon, forms the range of hills which extend down to the wilderness of Paran, the extremity of Arabia Petræa on the west. The spur, after sinking very considerably, rises into the hills of Upper Galilee and Lower (southern) Galilee; of which Saphet is the highest point, and on the southern side of which stands Nazareth. Immediately fronting the Nazareth line of hills, is the fair vale of Esdraelon (Jezreel), rich and wide enough to produce bread for the whole land. Then rise the hills of Samaria, with Ebal and Gerizim, and the prolific and beautiful vale between, for ever celebrated for the conversation there held by Jesus with a woman of the humbler class. Next comes the hill country of Judah, having as its chaplet Jerusalem, the city of Jehovah—a region abounding in great names and venerable associations.

It is along this succession of hills and vales that the power of Israel chiefly developed itself. Here were the prayers uttered, the songs sung, the thoughts meditated and put forth, the good news proclaimed, and the deeds achieved, which, first proving the light and the strength of individuals, worked to the renewal of the face of society, and the salvation of the world. Accordingly, here we find the tribes of Asher, Naphtali, Zebulon, Issachar, Manasseh, Ephraim, Benjamin, Dan, Simeon, and Judah.

Between these two ranges of highlands runs the water-course of Canaan, consisting of the river Jordan and its tributaries. The Jordan takes its rise immediately below our left hand in the western side of Anti-Lebanon. Flowing in a southerly direction, it passes through marshes into the sea of Merom, or lake Huleh, and then runs in nearly a straight line until it expands into the sea of Galilee. Quitting this fine lake on its western side, it takes a serpentine course, so as to make the natural length of sixty miles into one hundred and fourteen, and at length falls into the Dead Sea, somewhat south of Jericho. Here its waters accumulate and spread abroad in a wide sweltering vale, begirt on three sides by lofty hills; and here, as in a boiling cauldron, they are carried off and dissipated by evaporation. The vale of the Jordan is, perhaps, the most singular on the face of the earth. Sunk between two ranges of hills, it varies from 800 feet above the level of the sea to 1300 feet below that level; and having a

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mean annual temperature of 73°, with copious supplies of water in the seasons of snow and rain, it abounds in vegetable treasures and beauties, while in the summer and autumn months it is burnt up and bare. Its two great collections of water—the sea of Galilee in the north, and the Salt Sea in the south—have peculiar features. The former, suddenly sinking to 652 feet below the level of the ocean, is a fine sheet of water, not unlike the more quiet of our English lakes; while the latter, with an average depression of 1312 feet below the Mediterranean, is a volcanic furnace.

The fourth line of country referred to is the sea-board. It is a narrow strip of land of varying width; under Lebanon it almost disappears; then, widening somewhat, it runs into the interior, forming the plain of Esdraelon. Narrowed to a point and intercepted at Mount Carmel, it again spreads out into the plains of Sharon and the wide levels of Philistia, until it sinks away into Cassiotis and the sands of Egypt. This long but contracted space of country presents to the student of history, commonwealths and cities renowned for commerce, wealth, arts, and arms. There, just below us on the right, is Phœnicia, with Sidon, its capital, and Tyre, the child of Sidon, so famous for brilliant dyes and multifarious merchandise. Then comes Carmel, with its priests of Baal and the venerable Elijah, the servant of the living God. Cæsarea succeeds—full of painful recollections of a later day, recalling a period of national degeneracy, as when Herod descended to be the instrument and the *protégé* of pagan Rome. The roses, or rather tulips, of Sharon invest a smiling country with pleasurable associations, which are succeeded by “wars and rumours of wars,” the collisions of chiefs, the din of battle, the moanings of the captured Samson, the crash of the falling temple, and the cry of the crushed nobles, which the name Philistine brings up in the mind of every diligent reader of the Old Testament Scriptures.

These four regions combine to make up the land of Canaan in the narrower sense of the word; that is, to the exclusion of the wide highlands stretching out from the Hauran to the Euphrates. A yet more limited application of the word Canaan was that which fixed it on the sea-coast commonly known as Phœnicia.\* In a secondary sense a

\* Gen. xii. 6; xv. 21; xxiv. 3. Exod. xxiii. 23. Judg. i. 1, 20. Matt. xv. 22.

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Canaanite signified a merchantman.\* This usage was derived from the commercial eminence attained by Tyre and Sidon.

You have now seen the general structure of the country, as well as its relative position. You are consequently prepared to recognise the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence in selecting Canaan as the spot on which to shed down the light of that grace which was to be the light of the world. When God wished to plant his church in the world, he took good care what spot of land he selected to receive the young and tender shoot. For this, as for every young and tender shoot, a good soil, sure protection, dews, and rains, would be requisite. All these were found in a high degree in Canaan. Not without reason may Canaan be called a conservatory. On the east it is protected by the desert, on the north by a rampart of mountains, on the south by the wilderness, and on the west by the sea. Then, in the bosom of the country, how numerous are the sheltering vales, the deep and all but unapproachable chasms, the high and inaccessible summits, and the capacious caverns! The entire Ghor, or Jordan vale, is, in one view, a hiding-place, and, in another, a forcing-house. With complete safety and with inconceivable rapidity would a tree planted here grow, flower, and bear fruit. Accordingly, it is in the vale of Siddim that we find the first rank growth of primeval civilisation. In Canaan, then, God found the shelter of a home and the protecting strength of a stronghold for his church, at a time when exposure must have ended in overthrow and ruin.

Yet, while Palestine was so good for conservation, it was equally fit for diffusion when the time for diffusion came. And, in this matter even, the narrowness of the country acted advantageously. Supplying a large population with cheap and ready food, Palestine ever and again was compelled to relieve herself from a surplus of inhabitants, constantly called into existence by her overflowing abundance. The outpourings of Canaan enriched both the East and the West.

Now that you are familiar with the skeleton of the land, you will also see how it was, not only that its population was for its size always great, but that, when its history first dimly opens to our eyes, so many separate peoples should

\* Isa. xxiii. 8. Hos. xii. 7. Zeph. i. 11.

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have existed and maintained themselves on its surface. The land was covered with petty principalities, and these were so many and of such a kind as to be scarcely credible, did we not know how readily the land lent itself to the formation and maintenance of small civil independencies. Scarcely, indeed, would it be an exaggeration were we to affirm that every group of hills was the fortress of a king, and every wide vale the nursery of a people. The sea-coast of the north was cut off from the sea-coast of the south. Consequently, the former became flourishing and great under Phœnician domination, while, in the latter, the Philistine Pentapolis grew alike into independence, power, and fame. Between Galilee and Judah mountains interposed, which made the inhabitants of the one strangers to the inhabitants of the other; and, in ancient times, a stranger and an enemy were nearly the same. Samaria, too, was separated from Gilead by the wide and deep vale of the Jordan, almost as completely as if a continent intervened. Even these instances, however, fall short of the fact; for tribes, clans, septs, and families, could and did maintain their individuality in the immediate vicinity of each other in every part of the land, from the Horites of Mount Seir, and the five kings of the vale of Siddim, to the Hittites of the south, the Jebusites and the Hivites of the midlands, and the Rephaim and the Hamathites of the north.

### MORAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF THE ABORIGINES.

The general social and civil condition of the chief occupants of Canaan in the days of Joshua will appear when we go through the land in the band of the spies; but we must here devote a special paragraph or two to their religious views and moral condition, because clear and well-founded opinions on these points we shall find of great value when we come to consider the order given by God to Joshua for the extermination of the Canaanites.

As the Canaanites were of the same stock as the Hebrews, so did they originally possess the same great religious truths. These truths, the common and most precious heritage of the Shemites, have found a permanent record in the opening chapter of the book of Genesis. To us, who are somewhat familiar with the confusion and the aberrations

of those early days, truly wondrous does the preservation of that priceless revelation seem. While, however, the word of God came down in a state of purity in the line of Abraham, it was polluted, distorted, and defaced in other Shemitic branches. Men, little satisfied to be "taught of God," and aspiring to build Babel systems of their own invention which should reach and carry them up to heaven, put forth their speculations as Divine truths, and so darkened counsel with words without knowledge. The sons of Heth had their Hegels and their Schellings, no less than our Teutonic brethren in these days. Nor was the result dissimilar. Professing to be wise, both became fools; whereas, had they been content to think themselves fools before God, they would have been wise before men, and wise indeed. Speculation, however, partly beclouded and partly superseded revelation. Instead of the worship of Him who made the universe, the universe itself came to be worshipped. Specially, the more striking and brilliant objects of nature attracted the eyes, and fascinated the hearts of sensuous races, living under a sky of peculiar brightness and oppressive ardour. The sun, moon, and stars were made objects of adoration. Throughout Canaan an astral worship prevailed. Nor let it be supposed that this was a worship of pure and dry speculation. Combined with the predominant conceptions, there were notions relative to primal causes; and the primal causes which were recognised as existing and operating among the heavenly host, were such as were known to be most general and most efficacious among the children of men. For creation, therefore, generation was substituted, and it was thought that the formation of the world and its forces was explained when images were paraded, borrowed from human sexual intercourse. But the thought and the theory, thus elaborated, must be symbolised ere it could be received by the multitude. Hence came visible images and public practices alike obscene and degrading. Religion was made the minister to lust, and its very temples were converted into bagnios.

Another source of lamentable degradation lay in the idle attempt ever made, and not least in Canaan, by heathen speculation, to discover and institute some means of atoning for sin and appeasing angry divinities. Oh! the unimaginable horrors that have hence deluged the fairest spots on



earth, and degraded families, tribes, and nations! The worship of Canaan was specially sanguinary and cruel. Human victims continued to be offered on its soil long after the spirit of a milder civilisation had banished such atrocities from Greece and Rome; and such was the fearful vigour with which Canaanite superstition struck its roots into the religious heart of perverted Israelites, that the abolition of human sacrifices in the land was among the latest triumphs of the Mosaic polity. The Phœnician history is full of instances in which the people, when suffering under great calamity from war, or pestilence, or drought, chose by public vote one of those most dear to them, and sacrificed him to Saturn. Infants were burnt alive, and the death had a special significance. The most acceptable offering of all was that of an only child. The image of Saturn or Moloch was of brass; the stretched-out hands were hollow, turned up so as to receive the body of the child, which thence slid down into a fiery receptacle below. Mothers brought their infants in their arms; and, as any manifestation of reluctance would have made the sacrifice unacceptable to the god, they stilled them by their caresses till the moment when the young ones were given up to the flames.\* The Scripture is very express in asserting the religious and moral abominations of the Canaanites. Canaan, the progenitor of the race, is set forth as made the object of a curse from the lips of Noah. The curse was not without its fulfilment:—

“Cursed be Canaan;  
A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.  
Blessed be the Lord God of Shem;  
And Canaan shall be his servant.”†

The men of Sodom, too, are described as “wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly.”‡ It is true that darkness did not cover the whole land. There was some light, at least on one spot; for Melchizedek, king of Salem, was “the priest of the most high God.”§ It is also probable, from Abraham’s dealings with the children of Heth, that they had not undergone the extreme of moral degradation.|| Similar is the tendency of the fact that the patriarchs were careful to

\* See more on the same subject in Kenrick’s “Phœnicia”; the chapter on Religion, pp. 281—336.

en. ix. 25. † Gen. xiii. 13; xviii. 20, seq. ‡ Gen. xiv. 18, seq. || Gen. xxiii.

## THE LAND OF PROMISE SURVEYED.

maintain the good opinion which was entertained of them by the idolators in the midst of whom they dwelt.\* Yet so deep was the repugnance which Isaac felt toward his Canaanite neighbours, that he expressly and strictly forbid Jacob to take a wife of the daughters of the land;† and Abraham himself exacted an oath from Eliezer, the head of his house, that he would not take a wife for Isaac of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom he dwelt.‡ This care to keep the Hebrews undefiled, and the indirect testimony against the Canaanites which it contains, are seen in the strong injunction contained in the following words: "Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the Lord your God. After the doings of the land of Egypt shall ye not do; and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do my judgments and keep my ordinances to walk therein: I am the Lord your God."§ Then follows an explicit and particular inhibition of certain moral deformities and crimes, for the most part too foul to be mentioned; and these are directly charged on the Canaanites in the words: "All these abominations have the men of the land done which were before you, and the land is defiled." Among these dreadful enormities we may select for mention this: "And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord."

Moreover, the criminality of the actual occupants of the land is expressly assigned as the reason of the measures divinely taken for their ejection and extirpation. How frightful must have been the social degeneracy which called forth the following description and warning: "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you; and the land is defiled; therefore do I visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out its inhabitants; ye shall therefore keep my statutes, that the land spue not you out also when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you; for whosoever shall commit any of these abominations shall be cut off from among their people."||

\* Gen. xxxiv. 30. + Gen. xxviii. 1. † Gen. xxiv. 2, seq., comp. xxvi.

‡ Lev. xviii. 2—4. || Compare Lev. xx. 23; D.

Gen. xv. 16; Deut. vii. 4, seq.; F

## THE SPIES : OR,

With historical truth, as well as poetical beauty, has our English Homer set forth, not only the names and abominations of the false gods of Canaan, but also the moral and spiritual pollutions of which they were the authors. The passage, too long for quotation, will repay perusal, as may be inferred from what follows :—

“ First Moloch, horrid king, besmear’d with blood,  
Of human sacrifice and parents’ tears ;  
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud  
Their children’s cries unheard, that pass’d through fire  
To his grim idol.  
Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab’s sons.  
Peor his other name, when he enticed  
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,  
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg’d  
Ev’n to that hill of scandal, by the grove  
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate.  
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd  
Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love  
Vice for itself ; to him no temple stood  
Or altar smoked ; yet who more oft than he  
In temples and at altars, when the priest  
Turns Atheist, as did Eli’s sons, who fill’d  
With lust and violence the house of God ?  
In courts and palaces he also reigns,  
And in luxurious cities, where the noise  
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers  
And injury and outrage ; and when night  
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons  
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.  
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night  
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door  
Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.”\*

## THE SURVEY OF THE SPIES.

It was a fine morning early in the month of September,† in the year of the common chronology, 1490, when I found

- \* Milton’s “Paradise Lost,” book i., 376—505. See also hymn on the Nativity, 197, seq.

† Numb. xiii. 20. As intimated in page 2, the writer here supposes himself to make one of the small band sent by Moses to survey the land of Canaan. (Numb. xiii.) This form has been chosen as one that may combine the greatest amount of information with the greatest degree of interest. In substance, the narrative, even in minute particulars, is historically correct ; the hues and general colouring correspond to reality ; the impression on the reader’s mind will in general reflect the original ; only in the form is there any deviation from it, and here the deviation is as slight as possible.

## THE LAND OF PROMISE SURVEYED.

myself mounting my camel to accompany those whom Moses had deputed to survey the land of Canaan, in order to ascertain whether or not it was prudent to invade it forthwith. In all, we were fourteen persons, twelve men of distinction, myself, and one attendant, by name Michael. We had resolved to limit ourselves to one attendant, in order not to increase our band, lest we should be discovered and apprehended; and we had chosen Michael because he had travelled over the country, and was familiar with its history.

Special care had been employed in the selection of the messengers. One was taken from each tribe, so that the whole might represent the nation. They were men of good repute, each a ruler, wise in counsel, firm of purpose, and prompt in act. But how could a band of fourteen men hope to escape detection? In order to cover our purpose, we took with us an assortment of Arabian merchandise. The character of Arab merchantmen we could sustain the more easily, because the twelve representatives of the tribes had spent nearly forty years of their lives in the Peninsula. The choice of a leader lay with the twelve; with one voice they chose Oshea, the son of Nun. Moses approved the selection, and in order to give weight and emphasis to the embassy, called a solemn assembly of the heads of houses; and, after delivering a deeply impressive charge to the deputies, celebrated the occasion by changing the name of Oshea into Joshua, thus signifying that the hope of the people and of the embassy was in Jehovah.\*

It was a happy thing that our leader was one in whom full confidence was reposed. Long had Joshua held high commands in the host. In a critical moment he was promoted to lead the forces, and the ability and prowess which he displayed in defeating Amalek,† gained for him universal esteem, and caused every eye to turn to him, as, after Moses, the servant of Jehovah before the people. This tacit designation of Joshua to the military headship of Israel, made it of importance that he should, with his own eyes, survey the land he might have to invade.

The day had scarcely dawned when we mounted our camels,

\* Oshea (Hosea) signifies "help." With a slight change Oshea becomes Jeoshea or Joshua, that is "Jehovah (our) help." Compare Gen. xvii. 5.

+ Exod. xvii. 8, seq.

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and set out on our important and perilous errand. A fresh breeze gently fanned our cheeks, and we started forward at full speed, with spirits bounding like the tread of our beasts. All at once the sun poured his burning rays around us, and we were sensibly made aware how heavy and trying a task was travelling at this season of the year. Long after we had left Kadesh, we toiled over desert and broken highlands, and ever and anon found ourselves in a wilderness of rocks. Even when, on still ascending into Canaan, we met with signs of an inhabited country, we still seemed scarcely out of the wilderness; and it was only by calling to mind the calcined mountains of Sinai, that my companions could believe they were approaching a fertile and thickly-peopled land. On every side the uplands were parched; every patch of grass wore the appearance of having been burnt; the water-courses were dry; no cattle were to be seen; and all looked as if a fiery blast had passed over the soil. By and bye, however, blades of something which had been green began to show themselves in nooks and glens; a faint ripple of water was here and there heard in the vales; and the downs gave signs that not long before flocks had grazed over their surface. Pressing forwards we were soon saluted with softer scenes and fairer prospects. We entered the valley of Aroer, and found ourselves in the midst of wood and water; cattle browsed on the heights, flowers bedecked the lateral wadies, and though we met no human beings, we saw here and there a human dwelling in the distance.

Having, with the exception of two hours at noon, when the fiery heat made travelling impossible, pursued our journey uninterruptedly, we at nightfall pitched our tents; and having taken refreshments, began to discourse about the land through which we were travelling. The substance of what was said and learnt in conversation I shall, for the sake of brevity, report in narrative, on other occasions as well as this.

Within a few miles on our left stood Beersheba and Gerar. Even in the days of Abraham, Gerar had a king of its own. His name was Abimelech. Abimelech was alarmed at the patriarch's power and prosperity, lest he should be subjected to servitude. But Abraham feared God, and so, being free from the lust of ambition, he was prompt to remove Abimelech's fears. Yet did the former know how to maintain

## THE LAND OF PROMISE SURVEYED.

his rights. Abimelech's servants had violently taken away a well of water from the servants of Abraham. For this, Abraham reproved Abimelech. However, an accommodation was effected. Around the well called "Beer," stood seven ewe lambs, with the two princes at hand. This was the price of the well, and this the witness of the compact. The cattle became Abimelech's, the well Abraham's. The contract was sealed by an oath, and so the spot was henceforth called Beersheba, that is, "the well of the oath." \* The friendship thus formed proved serviceable to Isaac in a time of need. For Gerar is the frontier city of Philistia—a wide and extended country, most prolific in human food, in which Abraham's son found plentiful resources when he and his were suffering from famine. The mention of these and other incidents led on to much conversation respecting the



A PHILISTINE CAPTIVE.

Philistines — their origin, their power, and their spirit; but a visit to their cities was deemed impossible in the few weeks that safety allowed to be spent in the survey. It was, however, the general opinion that the Philistine tribes must be of the common Hebrew stock, since the patriarchs conversed with them without the aid of an interpreter; and it was thought probable that, having originally come

from the borders of the Red Sea, they, with other shepherd wanderers, had seized on Egypt, whence they were afterwards

\* Gen. xx. 2, seq. Compare Gen. x. 19; xxvi. 1, seq.

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driven to settle at last in the lowlands bordering on Egypt and Canaan.

The evening of the next day found us in the plains of Hebron. We had travelled some twenty miles through a hilly country, ever ascending,\* and ever growing less dreary, until it became rich and charming. Here we had been and were in the land of the Hittites—those sons of Heth the Canaanite, whose rule, centering in this district, extended so far as even to give name to the whole country.† Their power, however, was not without a check. All along their eastern border, clans of Amorites bare away—men of a wilder character, and holding a wilder and mountainous district extending by the side of the Salt Sea.

With peculiar pleasure did my companions pitch their tents, and take their evening meal, in these well covered meadows. Their eyes glistened, their words were free, and their manner was unusually cordial; they seemed as if they were at home. And at home, in one sense, they were, for there was the field of Machpelah, purchased of the princes of the land by their great progenitor; and within that tomb reposed in peace the ashes of Sarah, the mother of Israel. The very spot, too, where our tents stood, was made sacred by the purchase of that land—a transaction in which the politeness of a courtier is added to the strict integrity of a tradesman. The event was spoken of long into the night. With ever renewed emphasis did Joshua refer to the fine testimony borne to Abraham by the children of Heth. "Hear us, my lord; thou art a mighty prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead: none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayst bury thy dead." Ere we threw ourselves down to sleep, we went into the open air. It was a starlight night. Of the purest brilliancy was the atmosphere. The heavenly bodies seemed almost to live. A large meteor fell not far from where we

\* Khalasa, at the termination of the Desert of Paran, stands 704 feet above the Mediterranean; at Beersheba the elevation has risen to 1100 feet, and Hebron stands 2800 feet above the sea, being the highest point in the hill country of Judah, in a section running north and south. After this explanation, we shall, when desirable, content ourselves with simply adding the elevation above the level of the ocean to the name of a plain; e.g. Hebron (2800).

† Josh. i. 4; compare Gen. x. 15; xv. 20; xxiii. 7, seq.

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stood, drawing after it a train of broken, sparkling light, resembling a train of cherubim. The incident recalled to our thoughts the celestial visitants, who on this very spot appeared to Abraham as he sat in his tent door in the heat of the day. Our hearts filled with silent devotion, and we almost fancied we heard the interchange of those venerable words, and shared in the hospitable rites which graced the occasion.

Hebron we found a strongly fortified city; but the walls were somewhat fallen into disrepair. The reason was, that Egypt was at present weak. Thither had the Hittites once carried their arms. For a time they obtained a settlement in the land of the Nile. Driven thence at length, they had been pursued into Canaan, and the conquering Egyptian monarch followed up his successes to the extremity of the land. But the terrible blows inflicted by Moses had prostrated the strength of Egypt. Consequently, its rivals and dependents had grown, first contumacious, and then independent. A period of repose had made the Hittites wealthy; but it had made them also very luxurious and somewhat careless. Hence, there were not wanting tokens of decay in and around Hebron! Nevertheless, they were still a powerful tribe; many of their chiefs were mighty men of valour; the people, though subject to a king, enjoyed a large share of personal liberty; and everything gave assurance that, should war arise again, the Hittites would prove very formidable foes.

The dress of the chief men was showy, and appeared even gaudy to eyes accustomed to the bare severities of the desert. They wore Babylonish tunics, gathered into a knot on the left shoulder, so as to leave the right arm at liberty. They were plain, but of bright colours, with a deep edging of embroidery. The under garment corresponded in colour and pattern, and was somewhat short, scarcely reaching the knees. Their complexion, though dark, was florid rather than sallow, and the hair black. The features were regular, the nose very prominent and somewhat hooked. The beard, moustaches, and eyebrows were all closely shaved.\* They had also an unsightly custom of shaving a square place just above the ear, leaving the hair on the side of the face and the whiskers, which hung down in a long plaited lock. The

\* Lev. xix. 27; xxi. 5; Isa. xv. 2; Jer. ix. 26; xlviii. 37.



## THE SPIES: OR,

war costume of the Hittites consisted of a helmet or skull-cap, extending far down the neck behind, and cut out high and square above the ear, so as to leave exposed the bald place and long lock which they deemed a personal ornament. Sometimes a metal scale defended this part of the head.



It was secured under the chin by a strong band or chop-string, probably of metal like the helmet. The badges of distinction were one or two ostrich feathers, which were worn drooping. Their war-dress was principally distinguished from that of the neighbouring tribes by the cape or short mantle of the Tyrians, which tied in front, either with the two ends of the cloth or with cords and tassels; and by the girdle, which was broad and thick, and hung down in front with a long end terminating in a ball and tassel.\* Their chief weapon was the bow. With them we found a ready market. Our wares proved acceptable and attractive. Gold and silver they possessed in abundance, and we heard whispers of a recent foray down toward the Nile, which had been successful and productive.

Our stay was short among the children of Heth. Having learnt their strength and their weakness, we hastened onwards. We took a northward direction, which would bring us to the chief city of the Jebusites (Jerusalem). Passing over alternating valleys and hills, we saw, here flocks and herds peacefully cropping the abundant grass, and there vineyards laden with clusters of fine purple grapes almost ripe. Even in this hot season, water showed itself, in different spots in no small plenty, and most sweet and refreshing were the draughts it afforded to our thirsty lips. At Bethzur, a small town we came to on our way, we found a large brook, whence we drew copious refreshment, and in which several of the company bathed.†

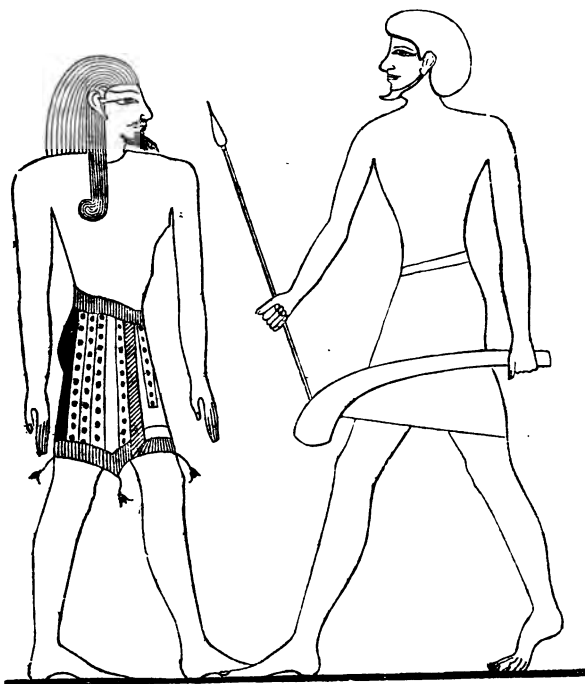
\* Osburn's "Ancient Egypt," p. 127.

† Josh. xv. 58, compare 2 Chron. xl. 7. This is the spot where it has been thought Philip the eunuch was baptised. (Acts viii. 26, seq.)

## THE LAND OF PROMISE SURVEYED.

Shortly after we had entered on our path, we heard of a fine vale of terebinths lying to the west; but we could not turn aside. Truly, a pleasant and a bountiful land was that. The later grain crops stood in the fields ready for the sickle. Flowers sprang up around our feet the moment we entered a sheltered and watered spot. The voice of the turtle dove beguiled our way. The fig-tree displayed its finest fruit; the pomegranate appeared in all its beauty, and was luscious to the taste; and the grape on every side gave forth a rich fragrance. \*

A few miles more brought us within sight of Jebus, (2200) the approach to which, from Hebron, included many inequali-



JEBUSITE CAPTIVES.

\* Compare Song of Solomon, iv. 11, seq.

ties, but seemed in general to be a small gradual descent. As we neared the city, we met a troop of Jebusite warriors, who had been down into the vale of the Jordan in order to punish some freebooting, committed under the connivance of the king of Jericho. They were tall athletic men, capable of great endurance, and endued with a fiery spirit. With that proneness to violence which often ensues from a consciousness of physical force, some of the stragglers from the troop began to offer us insults, and even pretended to impute to us other objects than our attire and our burdens bespoke. The jeering was disregarded; but when our scrutineers began to lay hands on our property, we felt it necessary at all risks to repel the injustice, lest next they should seize our persons, and so our object be wholly defeated. An unexpected blow from Michael, however, seemed to have startled the assailants into a sense of the wrong position into which they were hurrying, and after the interchange of a few hot words, we were allowed to proceed without further molestation.

And now we had descended into the valley of Rephaim, when lo! the city stood full before us. It was a fortress rather than a city—a fortress fashioned by nature even more than by art. Girded on all sides, except the north, by deep vales, or rather ravines, with encircling hills near enough to act as ramparts, and distant enough not to serve an assailant as walls of circumvallation, Jebus, built on a huge mass of rock, stood there high above our heads with an appearance of being literally impregnable, and looked like a stronghold or castle, raised aloft to defy attack and command the entire country. In fact, its king exercised a species of qualified supremacy over four neighbouring princes, who, with himself, formed, when self-preservation required, a voluntary confederacy.\*

Here it was that we were much struck with the number of independent peoples and princes, compressed into spaces which seemed little else than cages to persons long used to the wide plains and mountain ranges of the wilderness. Along the ridge of hills on which we had come, with their immediate dependencies on the declivities, the vales, and the depressions, some score of kings had become known to us by name, all of them exercising separate rule, and governing, apparently, nations dissimilar in origin as in name. And

\* Josh. x. 1, seq.

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certainly different was their blood, if we may judge by the perpetual strife and conflict in which they lived. On its surface Canaan wore the appearance of one continued camp, and our first impression was that the country was too strong to be captured, even by our well-disciplined, hardy, and daring forces. Joshua, however, pointed out the fact that what looked like strength was really weakness, for one clan kept the other in constant check, and a universal jealousy made union unlikely and almost impossible.

"If," said he, "the armies of Israel were to capture Hebron, or any other considerable place, the confusion and alarm which would arise, would soon throw the whole land into our hands."

"But," replied Shaphat, the son of Hori, of the tribe of Simeon, "Hebron would gather strength from her neighbours, and come out in formidable array against us."

"Not," was the rejoinder, "not till the waters of the Jordan unite with the waters of the Red Sea; for first must Hittite and Jebusite, Philistine and Amorite, lay down their enmities, and become animated by an unselfish love of the common good."

We tarried too long at Jebus, such were the attractions of the city and its vicinity. Well were we received by the people, who were possessed of substance, and were not a little willing to exchange their abundant silver and gold for the choice cloths and rare spices which we brought. From the high hills around the city we surveyed and studied the land. In this particular, Joshua manifested peculiar diligence. With him, again and again, I ascended Mount Olivet. How well were we rewarded! The city lay below us, compact, strong, and all but unapproachable. In the south, we caught a glimpse of Hebron. On the east, we discovered Jericho on the west bank of the Jordan; and the plains of Moab, with the hilly masses that rise therefrom, on the right. And then, what riches and beauties met and gratified our eyes! These, too, seemed rather a divine gift than the result of human labour. Indeed, war, not tillage, was the occupation of the inhabitants. There was, however, little need for artificial efforts, so abundant were the spontaneous products of the soil. Now, then, for the first time, with this practical commentary before our sight, did we comprehend the exact meaning and full import of the

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description of our great legislator: "The land is a land that floweth with milk and honey: it is not as the land of Egypt, where thou sowedst thy seed and wateredst it with thy foot as a garden of herbs; but the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven; a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year."\*

The Jebusites, as delighting in war, were a well-armed people. They wore a jointed corslet, fitting tightly to the body below the arms, but leaving them and the chest at full liberty for action. The nether garment scarcely reached to the knee. Very common with them was a cap made of cloth, which hung down in a kind of pouch behind. They



also used a helmet of peculiar form, with a peak behind to defend the neck. Their arms were the shield, the spear (of which they

usually carried two), the bow, the club or battle-axe, the sword, and a short curved staff or mace, made of heavy wood, evidently intended for throwing.

Not without reluctance did we quit Jebus, nor until our leader had by his discourse fixed in the mind of every one of us that this group of insulated rocks would, in process of time, become the capital of the whole land. Our path wended to the east, and we soon found ourselves on spots too sacred in our memories to allow of any other than historical associations. Shortly we came to Luz, or Bethel. Truly, it seemed to us "the house of God and the gate of heaven," as it did to the patriarch Jacob, when journeying from Beersheba to Haran, he here saw that vision of angels ascending to heaven, and descending to earth, to picture forth God's constant and intimate care of Israel his son, the heir of Canaan.† And was it not on this very spot that Abraham first obtained a resting-place for the soles of his weary feet?‡ Anxious as we were for speed, we tarried here, and while disposing of some goodly pearls, examined the country somewhat minutely. Not only did we visit and explore Hai on the east, but we were so fortunate as to discover what remained of the altar raised by Abraham unto Jehovah, at which God

\* Deut. xi. 9-12.

+ Gen. xxviii.

‡ Gen. xli. 8.

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appeared to his servant, and gave him the whole land, though then as now held by the Canaanite.\* Truly, a rich present, for these uplands gave signs of being pre-eminently fit for pasture; while from the neighbouring vales we heard the songs of the vintagers, as they rang through the clear atmosphere, and were echoed from the rock-side.

From Bethel we passed by a curving path, and entered the vale of Shechem (1700) at its eastern outlet. How overpowering our emotions! In front and on our right rose the dark Ebal, (2500) destined to be the hill of cursing, while on our left green Gerizim (2500) saluted the eye, and seemed already to be a hill of blessing. How lovely must this wide, long vale have seemed to the weary father of Israel, as here he tarried, when coming, under divine guidance, from his distant home beyond the great river. Wearied with our journey, we with reverent joy seated ourselves on Jacob's well. Being refreshed, we all, as if by a common spontaneous impulse, threw ourselves around the altar he had there erected, and worshipped his God, his father's God, and our God.†

Suddenly, our devotions were disturbed by loud and angry voices, and by the clash of arms. Springing to our feet, we beheld one troop of armed men pursued by another. The combatants passed down the vale westwardly and disappeared. We afterwards learnt that the pursuers were Perizzites, and the pursued Hivites, dwelling near each other, the former around Bethel and Hai, the latter on the north of Ebal. Thus does the interval of a few miles, and the intervention of a hill and a vale, turn neighbours into deadly enemies. Truly, the Canaanite is delivered over to destruction. Yet how beautiful this land! what bounties has kind heaven showered thereon! Those mountains are speaking symbols—Gerizim betokens God's goodness; Ebal, man's wickedness; for what God bestows as a blessing, man converts into a curse.

Our path onward conducted us along the road taken by the fleeing Hivites. Light were our steps and joyous our hearts, for almost every spot in succession offered us some proof of the fertility of the district, or some exhibition of its loveliness. Turning off on the right, we soon entered on a rapid descent, till we came in front of the vast plain of

\* Gen. xli. 6—9.

† John iv. 5; Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19.

Jezreel (250). The wheat and the barley had been gathered, and, to judge by appearance, most abundant had been the crop; but wide tracts still bore other grains; the hill-sides, south and north, were covered with groves; palms, fig-trees, pomegranates, and vines decorated and enriched the lower grounds, while birds sang out from every tree, and insects swarmed from every bush. What an amount of life in this one plain; with how profuse a hand does the gracious Father bestow his gifts on men!

Arrived at this point, we had an option before us. We might turn off to the west, and so make our way into Phœnicia; or we might turn off to the east, and so reach the sea of Galilee. We took the former course, as likely to give us a greater diversity of knowledge; resolving to cross the mountains, and penetrate as far as the western flank of Hermon. Traversing Esdraelon on its western border, we ascended Mount Carmel. But who can describe the sensations I felt when, from its summit, I looked out over the blue swelling waves of that great sea, of which I had heard so much. My wonder rose into delighted astonishment when the white sails of a Tyrian merchant ship suddenly came into sight. Never did the moon rise so serene, yet so bright, as that evening she arose on the verge of those distant waters. "What," I asked myself, "what is beyond them? or are they really, as they look, boundless and interminable?" A mysterious awe seized my soul, and prayer was my sole relief.

We travelled along the sea-shore, and experienced a new pleasure as the waves rolled in and touched our feet, and the fresh breeze fanned our sun-burnt cheeks. Soon, ships ceased to be a novelty. Soon, what almost appeared a new race of beings became known to us. They were Phœnician sailors, small but robust men, full of vigour, elasticity, noise, and gaiety, restless as their own element, and almost as wild.

We reached Tyre. It was a youthful but strong city,\* a colony from great Sidon. We entered her gates thronged with wise men, who sat there to administer justice. We passed along her highways, and were astounded at her treasures. We went down to her docks and quays, and found ourselves in a wilderness of masts. What bustle, turmoil, and effort on every hand! What running to and fro! What

\* Josh. xix. 29.

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anxious eagerness in every countenance! One thought seemed to possess all souls—that thought was wealth. To amass treasures, the Tyrians lived, toiled, suffered, and died, often without the coveted prize. If previously we had been struck with the showy dresses of the Canaanites, what we saw in the market-places and palaces of Tyre filled us with amazement. By the side of those deep rich purples, and those deep brilliant scarlets, how tame seemed the richest of our merchandise! Besides, the traders of Tyre carried on a direct traffic with Babylon and the farther East through Damascus, and alike in quality and price put us to the blush. Happily, we had still a good supply of aromatics, otherwise our appearance in the marts of Tyre would have been too ridiculous. A generation or two previous to our visit the city had been conquered and sacked by the Egyptians; but such is the native vigour of commerce, that the people soon rose from their overthrow, and now seem able to bid defiance to any assailant. Certainly, their city is strongly fortified, and its defenders are numerous and well-trained; but if riches should

beget voluptuousness, Tyre too will fall and become desolate.

On reaching Sidon, we found ourselves in the cradle of the Canaanite races. At once did we recognise in the inhabitants, features which we had seen on monuments while yet in Egypt. Here is a specimen in a Sidonian captive.

While Tyre had in its appearance all the freshness of youth



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seemed sedate and respectable as age. In the former, men were occupied in making a fortune; in the latter, their business seemed to consist chiefly in spending a fortune. An air of grandeur covered the whole of Sidon, where a nobility and a sacerdotal class bore away, giving at once solidity and impressiveness to established institutions and prescriptive forms of life. Deep was our gratification as we surveyed the varied and costly products of Sidonian skill and industry. We saw a magnificent vase of silver intended for a prize in funeral games. We saw an embroidered robe, rich and elegant enough to be offered as a propitiation to Astarte. We saw a bowl of silver with edges of gold, used on festive occasions by the suffetes (judges) of the city. Splendid works in brass attracted our eyes on all sides. But most surprising were the Sidonian chariots—these for luxury, those for war—which surpassed in elegance and convenience even the chariots we had become familiar with in Egypt.

We quitted Sidon with a mournful presentiment. Already it was clear she was sinking under the shadow cast upon her by Tyre. The end of our journey was nearly reached. We were now at the northern extremity of Canaan. A visit into the highlands on the east would complete our task. The last evening of our sojourn in Sidon we wandered for an hour along the brink of the ocean. What a scene was that! How grand the face of that mysterious deep, illumined by the brilliant rays of the full moon. To me it seemed a mirror of the Infinite One. The precipitous sides of the Lebanon threw their huge shadows far over the ocean, and as with an imperial air, imposed silence on an element more mighty even than the “everlasting hills.”

Early next morning we were making our way into the vast body of these mountains. The road was steep and difficult. An Egyptian army had passed that way, and we saw trees felled and paths levelled; but the *debris* from the higher parts lay scattered everywhere, and in some places absolutely blocked up our way. Nor were we free from the fear of freebooters; for Arabs, who lived by plunder, true sons of *Lehmael*, prowled about for prey; and not long since a party of them had been daring enough to lay waste a suburb of Sidon. At the same time, we were not without our enjoy-

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ments. The air was pure and bracing. The woods and hill-sides wore deep autumnal hues, and that in a variety of colours surpassing anything I had ever seen. Indeed, vegetable nature seemed to be in her own element here. Thick copses, intricate jungles, vast forests, appeared at every step. Very grand were clumps of aged cedars, which we passed ever and anon, looking in their venerable strength like the princes of the land. The region, too, was all alive with wild oxen, wild hogs, bears, wolves, jackals, foxes, jerboas, hares, conies, and partridges. Above all, I was struck with the grandeur of the scenery. Parts of Sinai were more majestic, but Lebanon excelled in the sublimely beautiful.

Our path was now downward. From the summit we had caught a glimpse of the parallel range of Anti-Lebanon, and soon our eyes were delighted with the luxuriance of the wide long valley between the two. We entered the city of Rehob,\* (Beth-Rehob), which stands in the vicinity of Laish, and on the road to Hamath,† to which extreme boundary the Canaanites had penetrated. The district was inhabited by highland clans, who, connected in blood and intercourse with the more cultured tribes below, yet differed little from the rapacious herds of Arabs by whom they were surrounded, and with whom they lived in constant war. Our reception was none of the gentlest, and those of our band who had, from the force of childish recollections, trembled at the report, or, as they affirmed, the sight of giants near Hebron and Jebus, now, when they saw the massive frames, and beheld the crushing arms of these Hermonites, with all importunity urged our instant departure. Chiefly through their fears, we profited by the shades of night to quit the district. Our leaving was made the more impressive, and to some even awful and almost overpowering, by a thunderstorm, the flashes of which lit up the vales as with the glare of noon, and the roar of which, multiplied and intensified a thousand-fold by the reverberations of the hills, was made distressingly terrible by the roarings, howlings, and shriekings of wild beasts, seemingly innumerable.

When the sun was risen, we had the inexpressible pleasure of beholding the springs of the Jordan gush from the western flank of Anti-Lebanon. We followed the now swollen brooks which here feed and sustain a rank luxuriance till they unite

\* Numb. xiii. 21; 2 Sam. x. 6.

† Gen. x. 18.

and fall into the sea of Merom. To rejoin the camp at Kadesh-Barnea now became our sole thought. We yearned for the intercourse of our brethren; we longed to see and embrace our wives and children. Besides, if a campaign was to be entered on this year, the utmost despatch was desirable. Nor were we without a misgiving as to our own safety. At Sidon, an indiscreet word let fall by Michael had excited suspicions. What if our real object had, as we feared, been discovered? If we were pursued and captured, little hope remained that Israel would be able to conquer the land. In consequence, speed became important. Concealing ourselves by day in the thick brushwood of the Jordan, we travelled by night, and so reached Jericho in four stages.

On the eve of rejoining the armies of Jehovah, we were full of joyous anticipation. But what report were we to make? Joshua resolved to hold a council, and that we might be in full security, we withdrew into the neighbouring desert. We bore with us a full load of the products of the land. We had collected specimens of the arms, offensive and defensive, of its warriors. Of gold and silver, received in exchange for our goods, we possessed a large store. Well did we know the strength and resources of Canaan. What, then, was to be the tenor of our report? The storm under which we had quitted the vale of Lebanon, the peril of detection, and the stealthy manner in which we had returned, had shaken nerves ordinarily firm; and none but Joshua and Caleb, the son of Jephneh, of the tribe of Judah, allowed the possibility that Israel could succeed in making themselves masters of the country. The council broke up in a dissatisfied and troubled temper. "The camp at Kadesh!" "The camp at Kadesh!" was the cry. Joshua had no wish for delay; yet did he determine to cut from the vineyards in Eshcol one bunch of grapes, if any yet lingered on the vines. Directing the rest to hasten back with all speed, he, Caleb, and Palti, the son of Raphu, of the tribe of Benjamin, stopped near Hebron. They joined the rest of the party at Aroer.\* Before nightfall of the next day we were in the midst of our families and our brethren.

\* Judg. xi. 26.

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LESS than fifty years ago, the ruined rock-city, whose extraordinary remains it is our purpose to describe and illustrate in the present tract, & utterly unknown to European nations. The foot of no civi

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traveller had strayed, even by accident, into its deserted streets, and only the faintest echoes of its secret marvels had reached the ears of the pilgrim as he passed beneath the shadow of Mount Hor. Tales of strange import had certainly been current among the wild Bedouin tribes infesting the surrounding region; but they were invariably received with incredulity by the few Franks who, under their guidance, trod the inhospitable pathways of Arabia Petræa. It was in the autumn of the year memorable for the assassination of Mr. Percival, the storming of Badajoz, and the disastrous retreat of Napoleon from Moscow, that Petra first disclosed the well-guarded vestiges of its ancient magnificence to the eye of a modern European. How this discovery took place is worthy of narration.

Early on a morning towards the close of August, 1812, before the sun had begun to glare fiercely upon the wilderness once traversed by the liberated Hebrews, two men, attired as Arabs, might have been seen quitting Eldjy—a small village picturesquely situated near the entrance of Wady Mûsa, or the Valley of Moses. One of them, who was evidently acting as guide to the other, carried on his back a goat, while his companion, who was addressed as Sheikh Ibrahim, bore with him a skin of water. Any one in a position to overhear their conversation would have gathered the fact, that the strange sheikh was bound for Mount Hor, under a professed vow to sacrifice the goat to Aaron—a superstitious rite with which the Bedouins seek to propitiate the favour of the first high priest of Israel, for whom they entertain an extraordinary veneration. Presently they reach and enter the ravine represented on our first page, along which they with difficulty make their way for nearly two miles. At length the precipitous sides of the valley gradually widen and expand, until the intruders upon these profound solitudes find themselves in the midst of an extensive area, shut in on all sides by an amphitheatre of hills, and dotted over in every direction with ruins—the skeleton remains of an extinct city of the past. The faces of the rocks, too, were observed to be everywhere excavated into caverns, tombs, and temples, some of them displaying, even after long centuries of decay, the most classic taste and the most gorgeous architectural magnificence. The eye of the sheikh was eagerly, yet furtively turned on all

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these spectacles of departed grandeur; he even occasionally, though with timid, hesitating step, ventured within some of the mighty rock-hewn temples and palaces that overlooked his path; it was clear, however, that he was acting under some restraint; his impulses and his dread of danger were manifestly in a state of distressing conflict. The distrustful and anxious glances which he ever and anon cast upon his companion, who seemed to be totally uninterested by all he saw, proved that he was in some way connected with these secret misgivings. At length, on the sheikh turning aside to examine more narrowly one of the principal monuments, the suspicious guide exclaims: "I see now clearly that you are an infidel, who have particular business among the ruins of your forefathers; but, depend upon it, that we shall not suffer you to take a single para of all the treasures hidden therein, for they are in our territory, and belong to us."\*

Alarmed by this threat, Sheikh Ibrahim seeks to allay the suspicions of his guide, and earnestly protests that it is curiosity alone which prompts him to look at the ancient wonders around him, and that he has no other object in visiting Wady Mûsa than to sacrifice to Aaron. After this explanation, they proceed onwards until the decline of the sun warns them that the day is rapidly departing. Mount Hor is still at considerable distance, and it being clearly impossible to reach the tomb before nightfall, it is resolved to pause on a platform of the mountain, known as "Aaron's Terrace," and there immolate the victim. Here, then, in sight of the tomb, the goat is killed. As the blood begins to flow, the guide, in a fit of pious fervour, exclaims aloud, "O Haroun, look upon us! it is for you we slaughter this victim. O Haroun, protect us and forgive us! O Haroun, be content with our good intentions, for it is but a lean goat! O Haroun, smooth our paths; and praise be to the Lord of all creatures." The sacrifice accomplished, the pair hastily return by the way they came, their retreat being accelerated by the dread of

\* The idea of treasures being hidden in ancient edifices is deeply rooted in the minds of both Arabs and Turks. Many examples of this occur in Mr. Layard's account of his explorations at Nineveh. These people are not satisfied with watching a stranger's steps; they think that it is sufficient for a true magician to have seen and observed the spot where treasures are secreted, in order to be able afterwards, at his ease, to command the guardian of the treasure to set the whole before him.

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robbers, who prowl about in the recesses and labyrinths of the rocks.

The Sheikh Ibrahim of this romantic and hazardous adventure was none other than the celebrated Burckhardt, a man whom we may designate the pioneer of eastern travel. To facilitate his researches in regions which fifty years ago were almost inaccessible to Europeans, he adopted the costume, and simulated the character, of an Arab from Damascus. Stimulated by the reports of the extraordinary monuments of Wady Mûsa, which reached his ears on approaching the Arabian peninsula, he felt anxious to explore that realm of old-world marvels, and judge how far its fame was indebted to an oriental habit of exaggeration. But how to accomplish his purpose, without exciting the suspicions of his Arab companions, was a problem difficult of solution. He was bound for Cairo, on the other side of the great Arabian desert, and no ordinary consideration would have induced the company with which he was travelling to diverge so much from the main route as to visit the long-lost capital of Idumea. Had he frankly avowed his real object, not only would his request have been refused, but he would probably have been plundered of all he possessed. In this stripping operation, the secreted journal in which he registered his observations would have also been lost, the discovery of which would have served to confirm their worst suspicions concerning his intentions, and draw down their vengeance on his head. What he could not secure by open means, therefore, he resolved to attempt by stratagem. Accordingly, he pretended to have made a vow to slaughter a goat in honour of Aaron, whose tomb could only be reached by passing through the ancient city. In resorting to this censurable deception, he calculated upon the superstitious reverence of his guide for the saint; nor was he mistaken, for the Arab at once acquiesced in the proposal, and accompanied him on his errand, as we have seen. The only reward which the poor traveller was able to offer to the guide for his fatiguing journey was a pair of old horse shoes.

Taking into account the circumstances of restraint and terror under which Burckhardt made his hasty observations, his notices of the remains of Petra are surprisingly accurate. The publication of his description at once produced an excitement throughout Europe, almost equal to the sensation

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more recently created by the resurrection of Nineveh. It also led to various attempts, on the part of European travellers, to penetrate to this surprising spot, but, for some years, without success. Messrs. Banks, Legh, Irby and Mangles, were the first to overcome the many difficulties which beset such an expedition. The story of their adventures and perils forms one of the most romantic and exciting episodes in the annals of eastern travel. It would be out of place here to give more than the leading facts of the case.

Failing in several attempts to penetrate this sealed region, their only resource was to engage guides at Hebron, and proceed to Kerak, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. Meeting here with Abou Raschid, the chivalric sheikh of Shobek, a man of remarkable force of character, he undertook to conduct the travellers to Petra. This engagement, however, gave deadly offence to Abou Zatoun (Father of Olives), the sheikh of Wady Mûsa, who swore by "the beard of the prophet," and by "the honour of their women," that they should not proceed on their way; and, on seeing them about to mount their horses, exclaimed, "Let the dogs go, and perish!" hurrying forwards at the same moment, with his adherents, to rouse his tribe, and oppose their entry by force. At this critical juncture of affairs, some aged sheikhs present endeavoured to dissuade Abou Raschid from his purpose, and even numbers of his own people pressed round him, and implored him not to risk himself for the mere gratification of the curiosity of fellows who were only Christians; but the intrepid young sheikh's resolution could not be shaken. Finding that his arguments failed to make the desired impression, he leaped into the saddle, and exclaimed, "I have set them on their horses; let us see who will dare to stop Abou Raschid."

At this bold signal there was a general advance, the men of Wady Mûsa hovering on their flanks, and watching their movements. On the way, other retainers of Abou Raschid joined the escort, and at sunset they reached a camp of sixty-eight tents. Angry messages passed between the opposing camps, and a deputation was sent by Abou Zatoun, but without any satisfactory results. Matters now looked truly alarming; reinforcements on both sides were gathering from hour to hour, and the rival clans were pledged by oath to antagonistic courses; the travellers, therefore, shrinking from the res



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bility of kindling a sanguinary war between the tribes, offered to renounce their object. But the sheikh was determined; they should even, he declared, bathe in the waters of the valley, and if fair means could not compass this, he was resolved to achieve it by force. Other consultations followed, in which the Nestors of the tribe strove to temper the inflexibility of the young sheikh. At the close of the second day a rumour circulated in the camp that, through the influence of a blind Arab chief of great power, no further opposition would be offered to the travellers. The morning, however, brought less pleasant tidings. The men of Wady Mûsa still declared that they would oppose all approach to Petra by force. The aspect of affairs continued to grow darker and darker from day to day, till hostilities seemed inevitable. On the fifth day, as the travellers were deliberating whether there might not be some way discovered of stealing into Petra without passing the enemy's quarters, a great cavalcade was seen to enter their camp from the southward. As the procession advanced, several of Abou Raschid's men went forth, and led the horses of the chiefs by the bridles into the camp. Alighting at the tent of the sheikh, they kissed his turban. This was the sign of pacification. Peace was immediately proclaimed, swarms of fighting men were dismissed to their homes, and the sounds of strife gave place to music and singing. Such was the unexpected issue of this exciting adventure. The gratified travellers were attended by their intrepid champion during the two days which they spent in exploring the wonders of the rock-city, and were escorted back by him to Kerek, where, on parting, he kissed them all.

Although the privately-circulated description of Petra, by Irby and Mangles, fully sustained the representations of Burckhardt, yet the recital of his perilous adventures acted so discouragingly, that no traveller ventured upon the undertaking for ten years. It was in 1828 that Count Laborde, accompanied by M. Linant, was enabled to pass the rocky barriers, though not without encountering much hostility. The success in this instance arose, in a great measure, from the popularity of the latter gentleman with the Arabs, who had become acquainted with him through his long residence in Egypt, and who on this occasion treated them with great liberality. Nor was this visit barren of results; for it is to

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the wonderful industry of Laborde, during the short time spent amidst the fallen monuments of Petra, that the public are indebted for the first pictorial representations of the wonders of the place. Since then, the magnificent tinted lithograph views of Roberts have brought home to us the surprising scenery of the spot with a reality and a vividness that can never be surpassed by anything short of actual personal inspection: still, a deep debt of gratitude will ever be due to the artistic hand that first made us familiar with a panorama so wonderful.

Eight years after this visit, Stephens, the American traveller, when on his way from Egypt to Palestine, turned aside to see this great sight, and contrived to penetrate to the city without encountering any opposition from the natives: indeed, he and his party fortunately saw only one Arab during the day and night which they spent there.

And now, as the tidings of success were wafted from land to land, the pilgrims to this tomb of an ancient capital thickened from year to year. The rapacious Bedouins now changed their policy: instead of driving away the inquisitive stranger from their borders, they conspired to plunder his purse to the largest possible extent. Hence, the published narrative of almost every visit to the spot abounds with scenes of angry altercation. Almost close upon the footsteps of Stephens, at the close of May, 1838, came Dr. Robinson and his companions, with five camels, hired at Hebron. During the night succeeding their arrival, they were beset by a troop of ragged, wild-looking Arabs, headed by "The Father of Olives," the identical old sheikh who, twenty years before, had so obstinately resisted the progress of Irby and Mangles. They had come to exact the fee imposed on all travellers visiting their territories. This Dr. Robinson refused to pay, on the plea that Mahommed Ali had abolished all such extortions. Then ensued fierce gesticulations, brandishing of swords, firing of muskets, and other measures of intimidation. All attempts at a compromise failed, the greedy old chief being bent on enforcing his exorbitant demands. To avoid bloodshed, Dr. Robinson retreated by the way he entered, after a very partial examination of the wonders of the scene. Bertou, who had been to Petra only a few weeks earlier, had not escaped so easily from the clutches of the stubborn old savage, he

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been stripped of all he had, including powder, tobacco, soap, etc.

The next year, 1839, saw Mr. Roberts wandering amid these hoary relics of the past, and sketching those incomparable views, which will ever associate his name with the mouldering capital of Edom. He got off by paying 300 piastres, instead of 1000. A year later, and these solemn solitudes were again invaded by a large company of sixteen individuals, consisting of Englishmen, Americans, and Germans, with their attendants, and some fifty camels. Among this imposing caravan was Dr. Olin, whose description of the visit, in his volume of "Travels," is remarkably graphic and accurate. The tax paid to the Arabs by this party for permission to examine the ruins was commuted to 75 piastres each, or 1200 in all.

Before 1843, "The Father of Olives," so long the terror of pilgrims through Idumea, seems to have gone to his grave; for in that year, Dr. Wilson found the Arabs of Wady Mûsa under another chief. With this sheikh he sought a friendly interview, and made such arrangements as insured to him a peaceful and leisurely survey. Coming nearer to our own time, the late Mr. Bartlett, when engaged in tracing the wilderness track of the Israelites, paid a stealthy visit to Petra. Fresh from a fierce and protracted dispute with his overreaching guides at Akaba, he dreaded coming in contact with the disreputable Arabs of Wady Mûsa. He accordingly resolved to see the place, if possible, before the tribe was apprised of his approach. Evening was coming on when he arrived at the foot of Mount Hor. Leaving his servant behind to pitch his tent in a sheltered nook, he began the ascent of the mountain, and enjoyed a glorious prospect of the region before the set of sun. Night was gathering apace as he effected his descent. After a bleak bivouac of a few hours, the little camp was broken up, and, still surrounded by darkness, all were hurrying along the rocky road towards Petra. They entered unperceived, and spent many hours in an uninterrupted examination of the place. At length, while they were partaking of a repast in one of the tombs, a column of horsemen was seen approaching, which turned out to be the party dreaded. Finding, however, that Mr. Bartlett had stolen a march upon him, the leader contented himself with the usual gufr of 100 piastres.

Early in 1847, Petra was honoured with a visit from a lady

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of no less celebrity than Miss Martineau. She and her friends spent four or five days among the tombs and temples of this old fortress city, and it is in her eloquent work on "Eastern Life" that we meet with the best description of Petra extant. The party happily escaped molestation by paying the recognised fee.

### OUR VISIT TO PETRA.

Next to the gratification of actually visiting any site of great interest, is the pleasure experienced in perusing the descriptions of such a visit by others. There are few persons, probably, possessed of a spirit of adventure and a love of travel, whose hearts would not leap at the prospect of a tour to Petra, and who would not cheerfully brave all the fatigues and risks of such an undertaking for the sake of the wondrous sights which it would enable them to contemplate, and the glorious memories which it would help them to treasure up. As such a pilgrimage, however, is too costly, both as regards time and money, to be within the reach of more than a few individuals of ample means and leisure, those who are compelled to stay at home may well be grateful for any account of the place, sufficiently graphic to enable them to realize its wonders. This secondary pleasure we purpose to afford our readers, if they will for a brief period bear us company. For the illustration of the more prominent features and monuments of Petra, we shall be indebted, more or less, to the works of those explorers whose adventurous visits we have just reviewed. If our imaginary expedition lack the romantic accessories of excitement, and surprises, and blood-stirring disputes with the sordid natives, it will at least possess the recommendation of being entirely free from danger, and will cost us less than a single piastre per head.

### THE APPROACH BY THE SIK.

For many years after the discovery of the rock-girt metropolis of Idumea, it was believed that there was only one avenue by which access could be obtained to the central area. This impression was fostered by the Arab guides who accompanied the earlier travellers. The idea was confirmed, too, by the testimony of Diodorus. The different directions, however, from which subsequent visitors have entered the heart of the amphitheatre, disprove the accuracy of the statement

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For instance, Dr. Olin seems to have made his way into Petra over or through the southern hills, which are here not so lofty or abrupt as to be impassable. Miss Martineau, we may infer from her narrative, entered by the same difficult passage. This intrepid lady says: "Finding that we were not to arrive by the entrance which Laborde declared to be the only one (the Sîk), I determined not to dismount, in order to ascertain whether there really was more than one entrance practicable for beasts of burden. I entered Petra first, after the guide, and can testify to the practicable character of this entrance, as I did not alight until we reached the platform above the water-course." Bartlett, also, coming from Mount Hor, evidently penetrated by the same narrow, rugged pass.

Besides this southern portal, there is another means of ingress from the north, traversed by Dr. Olin, on his return to the area of the city, after exploring the Sîk and the wild rocky region beyond its mouth in an easterly direction. "In returning to Petra," he remarks, "our guide led us through another deep and wild ravine, which enters the northern extremity of the town. The way is narrow and precipitous, and practicable only for foot passengers. The mountains north of us resemble a cyclopean city of domes, and the rock is of gray sandstone, which gives them a hoary and venerable aspect. In some parts of this route, immense masses of rock, which have fallen from the higher regions of the mountains, stand reclining against each other on the sides of the ravine, forming covered ways, under which we passed. With the exception of a few inconsiderable excavations, or niches, in the face of the mountain, we discovered no marks of art or industry, besides an aqueduct, extending the whole length of this wild valley."

But it is by neither of these avenues that we propose to enter the city. The grandest approach by far is from the east, known as the Sîk. Transporting ourselves thither in imagination, without the intervention of Arab guides, let us commence the exploration of this fearful pass, making an industrious use of our eyes as we pass along. About two miles distant, in an easterly direction, from the site of the old city, then, we find ourselves at the entrance of a narrow valley, shut in by sandstone cliffs, of no great height at first. This is one of the extensively ramified suburbs of Petra, and it

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gives us a foretaste of the antiquarian riches of the place. The tombs at once arrest our attention. See, here, on our right hand, is an excavation, with a court in front, flanked by small galleries, resting on Doric columns. There is quite an Egyptian air about it, too; for on either side of the entrance into this court is a huge statue of a couchant sphinx or lion: they are too defaced to enable us to determine which. But we must not linger here.

Passing the façades of several sepulchres, which anywhere else would be objects of great curiosity, we pause before three tombs, very similar to the monuments named after Absalom and Zechariah, in the valley of Jehoshaphat. They consist of isolated masses of rock, which have been detached from the adjacent cliffs, having their sides chiselled into pilasters, pediments, and other decorations. There are excavations in the interior to contain the sarcophagi. Still advancing, we come to other remarkable repositories of the dead—one with a front of six Ionic columns, flanked by chambers—and another, high above it in the face of the cliff, bearing as an ornament four sculptured pyramids, still clinging to the living rock out of which they were hewn.

And now, after passing awhile along this once populous street of tombs, we reach a spot where the valley, which has been gradually contracting its width, suddenly expands into a soft green area, adorned here and there with grass and shrubs. Emerging into this snug bosom of the rocks, we can at first discern no outlet except the one by which we have approached. Following the brook, which has hitherto been our wayside companion, however, we perceive at length, in the opposite wall of rock, a narrow cleft through which the gurgling waters disappear. Here, then, shrouded by a little thicket of wild figs and oleanders, is the opening of the terrific chasm which anciently formed the only avenue to the city on this side.

A kind of awe settles upon the spirit as we enter the strange portal, which seems to shut us out from the living world. A dim, rock-strewn, almost subterranean road is before us—a veritable "valley of the shadow of death." A few paces only beyond the entrance of the *Sik*, a noble but decaying arch springs from one precipice to the other, and excites the astonishment of the beholder. The sides, as may

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be seen in our engraving, are enriched with niches and pilasters. Whether it were reared to commemorate some great exploit, or merely as an ornament over the gateway of this marvellous city, it is impossible to say. It is too narrow to have been a bridge, and too steep to have been an aqueduct. Its effect is highly picturesque and imposing. It has generally been deemed inaccessible; but Dr. Olin discovered some ancient steps cut in the rock, and masked by a thicket of shrubs and bushes, by which he was enabled to reach the summit, and examine the construction of the arch. In this elevated region, the same traveller observed traces of gardens, with remains of the gutters by which they were once irrigated.

At the part where it is thus spanned, the gorge is only about wide enough to admit two laden camels abreast. It opens and contracts irregularly as we pass along. The frowning cliffs soar higher and higher, as we plunge deeper into the awful chasm, until they reach an altitude of near 1000 feet, and often so overhanging the pathway as to shut out the sunlight, and merely leave visible a thin strip of sky. It reminds us of the cavernous obscurity experienced at the bottom of a coal-pit. There is this essential difference, however; for while the sides of a shaft are dark and uninviting, the faces of these precipices are often seen to be tinted with the most gorgeous hues; while the ragged and fantastic peaks of the rocks are hung with wild oleander, tamarisk, and climbing plants, whose festoons wave like the tresses of beauty upon the brow of desolation. Pursuing the abrupt windings of this defile, we ere long come suddenly upon a sinister spot which seems temptingly fitted for deeds of violence and blood; the shadows full blacker from the almost closing walls of rock; a sharp angle in the ravine appears formed for enabling the ambushed foe to fall upon his prey; and indeed here it was that, the year before the visit of Irby and Mangles, a party of pilgrims from Barbary were murdered by the Arabs of Wady Mûsa. Awful as is this gorge, however, it is yet romantically beautiful. The forms of the cliffs are so diversified, the contrasts of the colouring are so vivid and wonderful, the overhanging foliage is now so graceful and now so grotesque, and the vestiges of the skilled handiwork of the men of former days are so startling, that it need excite no surprise if we linger long amid these extraordinary scenes of nature and ancient art.

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No very keen eye is required to perceive that this passage, though now encumbered with thickets of oleander and fig, and fragments of rock, was once kept open with scrupulous care in the prosperous days of Petra. The waters of the brook, which now wander at their own will through the whole course of the ravine, were once conveyed along a channel elaborately hollowed in the rock. Vestiges of this ancient conduit still exist, as also of aqueducts and pipes, by which the water was alike collected and distributed. During heavy rains, when a desolating torrent would have swept along this gorge, provision was probably made to carry the surplus waters away in different directions; indeed, the explorations of travellers have clearly shown this to have been the case. The bottom of the pass was anciently paved with large square stones, in which, in places, ruts have been worn by Idumean chariot-wheels, in their passage to and from the capital.

Ah! how instinctively the imagination rushes backwards towards those long-vanished centuries, when up this pass came long trains of camels, laden with the silks, muslins, spices, and ivory of India, the gold of Ophir, the pearls of Arabia, amber and apes from Abyssinia, and the other luxuries of the rich east. Through this avenue tramped the servants of king Solomon, on their way to and from Ezion-geber, his commercial port on the Red Sea. Nearly all the traffic of those old times passed through Petra, which was an immense depôt and exchange for the merchandise of the east and of the west. As a place of rest to merchant-men, and of security to property, it was unexampled. Along here, too, in later times, drove the luxurious and imperious Roman in his chariot; or pleasure-seekers from the city, in their holiday garb, turning their backs on this realm of rocks, might have been seen, bound for the open country; or visitors from some far-off land would saunter onwards, with curious glances and awe-struck minds, beholding the marvels of the place—as we do now.

## THE KHUSNE.

But see! what is that vision of architectural beauty which breaks upon us, from between the grey perpendicular walls of the chasm, along which we must have proceeded now for more than a mile? Surely, it must be the celebrated Khüsne, or Treasury of Pharaoh, in whose praise all travellers are so



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eloquent. At first only glimpses of the façade, and pediments, and statues are seen—every turn in the road disclosing some new feature—until, on reaching the abrupt termination of the ravine, the entire front of the exquisite edifice bursts upon the view. It stands on a slightly elevated area fronting the principal approach to Petra, thus blocking up the way in that direction by what has been felicitously called a “barrier of enchantment.” The position of the structure is wonderfully fine, and the chisellings are surprisingly fresh and beautiful. The architects of Petra, as Mr. Bartlett has remarked, must have had an excellent eye for the picturesque; and with consummate skill have they here availed themselves of the level face of a vast cliff, to dazzle the stranger, as he emerged from the long shady chasm opposite, with the most beautiful of their rock-hewn monuments. Most fortunate, too, were they in the material upon which they had to work, for the exquisite rosy tint of the stone, contrasting with the gloomy masses around, adds to the beauty of the architecture.

Nor are we extravagant and singular in our admiration. The sober-minded Dr. Robinson, fresh from Rome, Greece, and Egypt, was moved to unwonted enthusiasm in recording his impressions of the spectacle. “I was perfectly fascinated,” he says, “with this splendid work of ancient art in this wild spot, and the idea of it was uppermost in my mind during the day and all the night. In the morning I returned, and beheld it again with increased admiration. There it stands, as it has stood for ages, in beauty and loneliness; the generations which admired and rejoiced over it of old have passed away; the wild Arab, as he wanders by, regards it with indifference or scorn; and none are left, but strangers from far distant lands, to do it reverence. Its rich roseate tints, as I bade it farewell, were lighted up and gilded by the mellow beams of the morning sun, and I turned away from it at length with an impression which will be effaced only at death.” Similar to these are the sentiments of Stephens, who writes of this “thing of beauty” as being to him “a joy for ever.”

As we gaze upon this marvellous monument of ancient art, we can scarcely realize the fact that the whole temple—columns, ornaments, porticoes, and porches—is cut out from and form part of the solid rock. From its base to the urn by which it is surmounted, it rises to a height of one hundred

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and twenty feet, while its frontage stretches one hundred and eight feet in breadth. It is deemed by competent authorities to be the very perfection of Roman art. The pillars and pilasters are of the noblest character, and support a splendid entablature. The figures on the upper part of the structure are much injured. The name of the Treasury of Pharaoh has been given to it by the Bedouins, from their belief that the wealth of a rich potentate of that name was here concealed. The graceful urn which forms the pinnacle of the façade is now thought to contain the precious treasure which they have searched for in vain in all the accessible parts of the temple. Being secured from all approach by its great elevation and the overhanging rock, the Arabs are continually firing at it for the purpose of bringing down its imaginary contents. Its surface is accordingly mutilated and perforated with balls; but the expected golden shower has never descended.

Having surveyed the richly embellished exterior, let us enter. Ascending several broad steps, we cross the colonnade and gain access to a large chamber, of some fifty-four feet square and twenty-five feet high. In striking contrast with the outward decorations, the interior is quite plain. On each of the three sides is a small chamber, apparently for the reception of the dead. Behind this is an inner apartment, on the back wall of which, as our eyes become inured to the dim light, we trace the names of numerous travellers, who have left this memorial of their visit.

## THE THEATRE.

But we must linger here no longer. Other sights await us. The ravine, which seems as if it had just opened to afford a suitable situation for this beautiful monument, now closes again for a while, and the cliffs become less lofty. Our way now turns to the right, which we pursue, following the course of the stream. Sepulchres in abundance, some of them decorated with pilasters, and half covered with wild vegetation, look down upon us from the rocks on either hand. At length the defile widens, and presently a strange wonder greets our eyes. Why here, as we make a sudden bend to the left, we actually come upon a THEATRE, hewn out of the bosom of the mountain. This gathering-place of Idumean pleasure-lovers is in good preservation; nearly all the rock-seats ' ' ' ' ' entire.

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It has thirty-three rows of seats, ranged in a semicircular form, open to the valley, and could easily accommodate five thousand persons at a time. There are remains visible of a row of columns which formerly extended along the front, opposite the street. High in the overhanging rock, immediately behind the theatre, are several excavations, which some have conjectured were galleries where persons of distinction sat to listen to the performances. They were, however, ill adapted to such a purpose, and were, far more probably, tombs made before the theatre was constructed. This vast area was open to the heavens, like the theatres of Greece and Rome, and the audience looked full upon the sepulchres which confronted them on the opposite cliffs. It was a strange taste which chose these gloomy environs as the arena of amusement and merriment. The reflections which here crowded upon the mind of Stephens are such as would occur to most visitors gazing on this singular scene. "To me, the stillness of a ruined city," he remarks, "is nowhere so impressive as when sitting on the steps of its theatre—once thronged with the gay and pleasure-seeking, but now given up to solitude and desolation. Day after day these seats had been filled, and the now silent rocks had echoed to the applauding shouts of thousands; and little could an ancient Edomite imagine that a solitary stranger would one day be wandering among the ruins of his proud and wonderful city, meditating upon the fate of a race that has for ages passed away. Where are ye, inhabitants of this desolate city? Ye who once sat on the seats of this theatre—the young, the high-born, the beautiful, and the brave; who once rejoiced in your riches and power, and lived as if there was no grave? Where are ye now? Even the very tombs, whose open doors are stretching away in long ranges before the eyes of the wondering traveller, cannot reveal the mystery of your doom: your dry bones are gone; the robber has invaded your graves, and your very ashes have been swept away to make room for the wandering Arab of the desert."

The precipices at the back of the theatre are hollowed in innumerable chambers, access to most of which may be obtained by flights of steps leading from the upper benches. Anxious to secure a good bird's-eye view of the city, into whose bosom we are now penetrating, we ascend one of the rugged flights of stairs leading to a lofty crag. The climb is

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BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF PETRA FROM THE BACK OF THE THEATRE.



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toilsome and dangerous; but at length we have reached the summit; and, oh! how magnificent the sight that bursts upon our gaze! It was from this spot that Laborde sketched his celebrated view of Petra; though Miss Martineau, who scaled the cliff and stood on the same commanding eminence, impugns the accuracy of his representation in some particulars; and it is from this spot also that the accompanying plan of the city is taken.\*

Look abroad. Far below on the right hand flows the stream, which, winding round the rocky point, crosses the open area in front, and then disappears in a cleft among the piles of rock on the opposite side. The principal buildings of the city stood along the banks of this brook, and the chief surviving edifices may be seen on the left hand, near its point of disappearance. Heaps of ruins, scattered to the north and south, show that the edifices of the primitive city covered these spots. But see the immense masses of rock which rise, like frowning fortresses, on the right of the picture, the lower parts of which are perforated with sepulchres. The left hand range is pierced by different ravines, and is also dotted with innumerable tombs—a region of death, looking down upon what was once a vast and crowded hive of noisy life far below. So that on all sides, if we are right in supposing that all these excavations were originally sepulchres, the inhabitants of this unparalleled city beheld the habitations of their dead engirdling them round. In the Forum (to the site of which we shall come presently)—in the streets—from the roofs of the private dwellings—in the theatre—in highways and byways—up to the topmost crags of their rocky rampart—there were still sepulchres, nothing but sepulchres, even for miles out of the city! The habitations of the dead must have outnumbered those of the living. Yet doubts may reasonably be entertained whether some of these rock-excavations were not really the dwellings of the Edomites.†

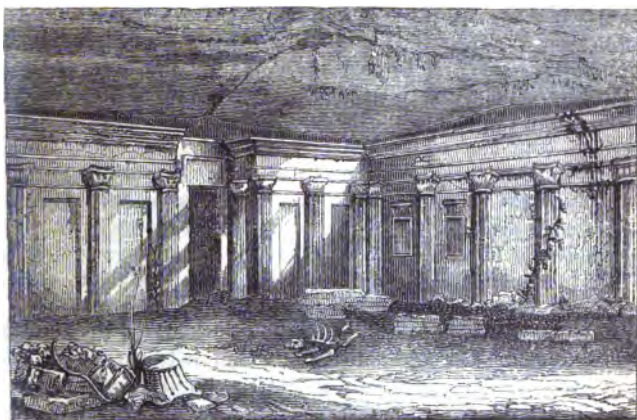
But it is time to descend from our eyrie, that we may examine more minutely a few of those multitudinous excavations,

\* This sketch of the interior of Petra has been copied, by the courteous permission of the publishers, from Bartlett's "Forty Days in the Track of the Israelites"—an exquisitely illustrated work, of which it is impossible to speak in too high terms of praise. Some slight alterations and additions have been made in the plan, to facilitate our references to the more prominent ruins of the city.

† Bartlett.

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whose imposing façades arrest and rivet attention. The task is done, and we find ourselves again within the embrace of the theatre. Crossing the brook, by the aid of some fragments of ruin, we make for the great range of temples and tombs which appears on the right hand side of our sketch. On our way we pause awhile, to explore some of the excavations that thicken around our path as we advance. Animated discussions have often taken place among travellers as to whether these rock chambers were originally designed as tombs for the dead or dwellings for the living. In most cases, it is very difficult to determine the point, since very few instances are on record of the discovery of any human remains. Some of these caverns, however, were clearly sepulchres, since pits are still visible in which the dead had been laid; while others were as certainly dwellings.



INTERIOR OF ONE OF THE TOMBS OR DWELLINGS.

### THE EASTERN RANGE OF TOMBS.

Pursuing our onward course, along the eastern range, the next object of special interest is a structure which, like the Khüsne, is crowned with an urn (marked 1 in the plan), battered and mutilated by the bullets of the natives. As a specimen of architecture it is very singular and unique. Its base springs from an artificial platform about one hundred feet above the level of the valley. Amidst the masses of ruins which

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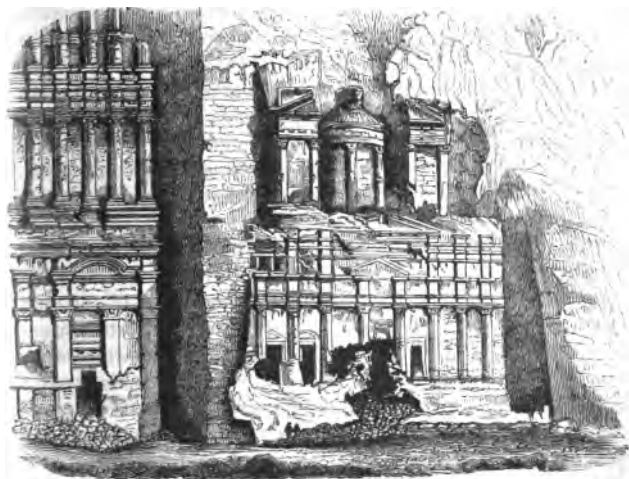
have accumulated here, we can discern five stupendous arches of solid masonry; and behind them are several chambers cut out of the mountain. Above this rises the great temple or tomb. Having clambered to the top of these heaps of ruins, we step from them upon a broad platform, which is flanked by two galleries, twelve feet deep, supported by columns, and which run back to the front of the main apartment. The front of the edifice is adorned with four magnificent pilasters. There is a window over the ample doorway, and others between the columns. Let us enter. The interior, we at once perceive, though without embellishment, is in an excellent state of preservation, and still bears the marks of the chisel in every part. It has six recesses in the wall; and another large chamber adjoining it, into which we return to peep, has eighteen grave-like depressions sunk in the floor. But that for which this tomb is so justly celebrated is the splendid tinting of the rocks of which it is formed. The ceiling of the main hall is magnificent beyond description. In its northern half, a brilliant deep red is the predominant hue, intermingled, however, with deep blue, azure, white, and purple. No painter ever transferred to his canvas with half so much nature and effect, the bright and gorgeous scene painted on the western clouds by a brilliant sunset in summer. On the front part of the ceiling, these hues are deeply shaded with black, so as forcibly to suggest to the beholder the idea of a gathering tempest.

But these vivid colourings are by no means peculiar to this edifice. They are visible in all directions, in combinations and effects more or less magical. The prevailing hue of the sandstone formations of Petra is that of a dull red; but many of the rocks are decorated with a profusion of the most lovely and brilliant tints, which have been compared by Dr. Robinson to "watered silk," and by Miss Martineau's companions to "mahogany." Fancy red, purple, yellow, azure or sky-blue, black, and white, are arranged in the same mass in successive layers, or blended so as to form every shade of which they are capable—as brilliant and soft as they ever appear in flowers, or in the plumage of birds, or in the sky when illumined by the most glorious sunset. The red perpetually shades into pale or deep rose, or flesh colour. The purple is sometimes very dark, and again approaches the hue of the lilac or violet. The white, often as pure as snow, is occasionally just dashed with blue or

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red. The blue is usually the pale azure of the clear sky or of the ocean, but sometimes has the deep and peculiar shade of the clouds in summer when agitated by a tempest. The yellow is as bright as saffron. It is more easy to imagine than describe the effect of tall graceful columns exhibiting these exquisite colours in their succession of regular horizontal strata. They are displayed to still greater advantage in the walls and ceilings of some of the excavations where there is a slight dip in the strata. This gives, in the perpendicular sides of an excavation, greater breadth and freedom to the exhibition of colours, while in the ceiling of a chamber the harmonious blending of the tints is indescribably beautiful.\*

Having indulged in these general remarks upon this extraordinary characteristic of Petra, we hasten to visit the remaining tombs and temples of the eastern range. As we move along the rugged, rock-strewn ground, we cannot help picturing to ourselves the figure of that elderly maiden lady, Miss Martineau, as, with ear-trumpet at her side, she flitted from tomb to tomb, pursuing her explorations amid a deluging fall of rain. Hither also, not long before, came the lamented Bartlett, in secrecy and dread, and in one of the finest of these



THE CORINTHIAN TOMB.

\* Dr. Olin.



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sepulchres set up his cooking apparatus, and took up his temporary lodging. Here we are in front of it. Its outward aspect corresponds with his description. It is known among travellers as the CORINTHIAN TOMB. Its magnificent façade rises to a great height, and forms two stories, richly adorned with columns, entablature, and pediment. (See engraving.) The upper story is composed of three beautiful porches or miniature temples. The porches are separated by recesses or deep niches, which were probably occupied by statuary.

So much external beauty, though now sadly scarred and defaced, may well excite our expectations of finding the style of the interior in keeping with it; but on entering, one after another, the four rooms which have been hewn out of the rock, we discover that here, as elsewhere, the utmost simplicity, and even roughness, prevails. In one of these funereal chambers we behold unquestionable traces of our predecessors in travel. The roof is quite blackened with smoke from the fires that have been kindled during their bivouacs here. From the fragments of food and ashes scattered about, it is evident that this abode of the dead has again and again witnessed the festive enjoyments of the living. The apartments, set apart ages ago for the "long sleep" of some merchant-prince of Idumea, have frequently been used as the temporary dormitories of companies of inquisitive pilgrims from the far west.

Adjoining the Corinthian Tomb is another immense façade. Springing from a broad platform of rock, the front rises to a height of 80 or 90 feet. It is ornamented with a number of massive columns, between which there are four entrances. The peculiar character of the architectural ornaments will be seen to the left in the accompanying sketch.

The two façades to which our attention has just been directed are among the finest in Petra. Their position, too, is favourable, commanding as they do the entire area of the city, so that they must have been visible from the chief thoroughfares and resorts of the citizens. The cliff out of which they are formed, and which towers high above them, is itself a magnificent object, and indeed it appears, at the first glance of the eye along its ample bosom, to be an immense and gorgeously decorated palace.

A glance at the plan will show our position. (See figure 2.) The face of the eastern cliffs continues to exhibit excavations

## THE ROCK-CITY, AND ITS EXPLORERS.

as far as the eye can distinguish. Looking northwards, the broken surface of the ground rises, until it terminates in considerable elevations at a distance of about half a mile. Numerous dark fissures cleave this mountain range, many of which, according to the testimony of travellers, are crowded with the caverns of the dead. As time would fail us for the exploration of these wild defiles, which resemble in their general features the ravine we have already traversed, we give up the attempt, and turn off on the left hand towards the centre of the old city.

The area outspread before us is undulating and very uneven, and not unlike the interior of some old quarry. From the top of some of the mounds over which we are climbing, we can detect a stream coming down from the northern ravines to join the ancient river that crosses the area of Petra. We reach it at a point where it was anciently spanned by a bridge, the ruins of which are still traceable. Proceeding along the bank of the stream, we gain an idea of the early populousness of the city from the multitudinous fragments that everywhere encumber the spot. In places, large heaps of remains show where some palace or temple has mouldered away. At the junction of the two streams are the ruins of another immense bridge, by the aid of which we contrive to transport ourselves to the left side of the river. Here we find ourselves on the site of all the principal public edifices of Petra; and grand and stately must they have looked in the palmy days of Idumea's prosperity and commercial glory.

Climbing up the terraced side of the stream, we reach a spacious platform, which will be seen indicated in the plan. (Figure 3.) This is, perhaps, the largest level space that will be found in the city. It is sheltered on two sides by rocks, about 20 feet in height, the faces of which have been smoothed by art. The eastern side is formed by a massive wall, in good preservation. The remaining side was once enclosed, also, by some barrier, of which a mound of rubbish and a part of the foundation stones still mark the direction and extent. This great platform was certainly a place of public resort—probably the Forum of Petra. The spacious bridge by which we have just crossed gave access from the northern side of the river, and two decayed staircases still exist by which the multitude ascended to this theatre of business or pleasure. Ser

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pedestals and an immense prostrate column still mark the unquestionable position of a colonnade—the magnificent entrance to the Forum, fronting the north, and standing immediately above the bridge, from which it is separated by a broad paved thoroughfare, that extended from the eastern entrance by the Sik through the most central and splendid portion of the city. It was on this platform that Dr. Olin and his large party, and Miss Martineau and her companions, encamped during their sojourn in this city of the dead.

But we must not linger even here, attractive as the spot is both to the antiquarian and the student of history. The banks of the stream, and especially the southern one, teem with memorials of past grandeur. A little to the west of the supposed Forum we come upon some extensive ruins, which probably belonged to a temple, or to a place devoted to public business or amusement. They will be found marked (4) in the plan. The ground is covered with fragments of columns not less than five feet in diameter. Twelve of these, whose pedestals still remain in their places, once adorned either side of this stately edifice. Other massive pillars, also now prostrate on the ground, stood in the front and rear of the building. The site is bounded on the south by a nearly semi-circular bulwark of rock, excavated by art.

Gazing southwards from this spot, the eye rests upon numerous other piles and mounds of desolation: one of our companions says he can count fourteen at least. They serve to indicate the great wealth and magnificence of this ancient capital, as well as its dire calamities. Conspicuous among the relics of the past is a lonely column, indicating the site of some sumptuous edifice, of which it is the sole unfallen survivor among its prostrate and shattered fellows.

Continuing our ramble westward, along the border of the stream, we pass some remarkable substructions of a bridge. From the extent and magnitude of these works, it would seem that in former times the banks of the river had been faced with strong stone walls, to confine the torrent which would occasionally rush through the heart of the city. There are evidences, too, that the bottom of the channel itself was paved for the better preservation of its water from filth and waste. We notice as we pass along so many undoubted remains of piers and other projections in the embankment of

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the water-course, as to compel the conviction that the river was anciently vaulted and covered in—thus connecting the broad-paved esplanades which extended along both banks, and facilitating intercourse between the southern and northern sections of the city.

But see! what have we here? Excepting the solitary pillar, just noticed, keeping watch through the ages over the scene of its pristine glory, all the architectural marvels we have been contemplating have been carved out of the living rocks—not reared. It would seem as if the hurricane of Divine wrath had swept through the doomed city, and hurled down all its edifices in one indiscriminate ruin. But here, at least, we have an exception to the nearly universal prostration. In front of us there springs part of an arch—commonly known among travellers as the Triumphal Arch. (Figure 5.) It is constructed in a late and florid style of architecture. Under it are three passages; and a number of pedestals of columns, as well as other fragments, suggest the idea that a magnificent colonnade was connected with it.

Passing under the arch, and along the paved platform which extends beyond, we are speedily brought to an immense structure of mason-work, to which this colonnade was, no doubt, intended as an approach. This dilapidated edifice is thought by many to have been a palace, and is called among the Arabs, Kûsr Pharoön, or Pharaoh's Castle. (Figure 6.) The walls are nearly entire, and, on the eastern side, are still surmounted by a handsome cornice. The front, which looks toward the north, was beautified with a row of columns, four of which are still standing. An open piazza extended the whole length of the building. In the rear of this piazza are three apartments, the principal of which is under a noble arch, about forty feet in height. Joists of wood may, in different parts, be seen, let in between the courses of stone, which were no doubt intended to receive the fastenings for ornaments of wood or stucco. The distribution of the interior into chambers and stories seems to show conclusively that it was not a temple, but rather a public edifice of a different character, or a private palace.

Our explorations have now brought us to the range of cliffs which here defend the site. The hills are loftier than those on the west side.

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the ever-present tombs ; though in general they are here less splendid than those we have already examined. Numerous chasms present their verdant openings to the eye ; and it is through one of these, much broader than the rest, that the stream, whose pleasant course we have hitherto been following, flows, and becomes speedily lost to our view amid the thickets of oleander and other shrubs with which it abounds. As we know, from the experience of previous travellers, that no outlet has been discovered in this direction, we decline any attempt to explore the gorge ; amply satisfied, from all we perceive near its mouth, that it partakes of the same sepulchral scenery as every other nook of this region.

One other task remains, and then our pleasant expedition will be ended. Far away from hence, in a north-western direction, and situated among the topmost crags of yonder mountains, like the eyrie of the eagle, is a rock-hewn temple, called El Deir (the convent), which we must visit ere we depart from these scenes. The approach to this acropolis of the city is singularly difficult, wild, and romantic. At a short distance to the north of the Kûsr Pharoon, we turn in among some thickets of oleander ; and, threading our way through these, we soon find ourselves hemmed in between two walls of rock, running northwards. This defile much resembles the Sîk, except that, instead of being level, it rises by a steep ascent. It is exceedingly irregular and rugged, and in its natural state must have been utterly impassable in many places. This is particularly the case the nearer we approach to El Deir. To facilitate access, therefore, an extraordinary series of winding steps has been excavated in the rocks. Strangely varied is the scenery as we pantingly tramp along this sinuous mountain path. At one moment we are hidden among romantic precipices, darkened with large yew trees ; then, through openings in the cliffs, we obtain peeps of the area of the city below, with its girdle of tombs. The way becomes more and more difficult as we advance ; passing along the edge of yawning chasms, the depths of which cannot be seen from above, while the intricate wilderness of rocky peaks, rising in all directions, affords a sublime spectacle. The carved path is often fully six feet wide, sometimes cut on an inclined plane, and elsewhere fashioned into steps ; but it has been greatly injured by the action of the elements, and especially by the torrents which occasionally rush

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down these rocks. The length of the staircase has been estimated at more than one thousand five hundred feet, and often occupies half an hour to ascend it.

"There it is!" is the exclamation that joyfully escapes our lips, as we suddenly emerge upon a beautiful green area of two acres or more, at the back of which stands the edifice of which we are in quest. El Deir, however, is more remarkable for its startling position than for its architectural beauties. It is a gigantic monument, excavated from the face of a towering cliff, and producing, from its vastness and the wildness of its situation, an impression almost of awe; but it is very defective in style, for it is ponderous without grandeur, and elaborate without elegance. The interior resembles in its plainness the monuments already examined, consisting merely of one large chamber, with a recess or chapel at the extremity, reached by four steps. Here, where crowds of Edomites probably once congregated to join in their religious rites, the flocks of the Bedouin are now sheltered, for the temple has been degraded into a sheep-fold.

But this colossal excavation is not quite so solitary as we had supposed. Immediately opposite to it, on the other side of the small plateau, arises another crag, which has also been fashioned into architectural forms. The lowest part is excavated into tombs, or chambers; and there is a staircase leading up to a level space above. Climbing to it, we find the bases of columns arranged in a circle, forming the outline of a temple; or, as Miss Martineau suggests, of a circus. Above this column-strewn area rises the topmost summit of the crag, which seems to have been occupied by other edifices, commanding a wildly magnificent view over the sea of mountain peaks, across the Arabah to the frontiers of Palestine. Even Mount Hor may be here overlooked. There can be little doubt, as suggested by Bartlett, that in the palmy days of the Idumean capital, this was a very important spot. The huge excavated monument on one side, the crag on the other, with its ranges of buildings, the great staircase which led up to it, and the great staircase which led down to it, were a much-frequented site: the structures are in some connexion with the religious ceremonies, and the imagination may picture the entire ascent to their romantic abode. As

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regards the nature of these rites, or the manners and customs of these worshippers, although probably as peculiar as the spot they tenanted, it is to be regretted that no light has at present been thrown on the subject by the researches of either travellers or scholars.

It is surprising how little we really do know about this strange fortress-city, and its successive inhabitants, during the two thousand years of their prosperity. After the exciting antiquarian chace in which we have indulged, suppose we rest awhile on this commanding eminence; and, while feasting the eye upon the grand panorama of mountain and desert scenery that lies outstretched on every side, let us run rapidly over the history of this capital and its occupants, so far as it is known.

### HISTORY OF PETRA.

The earliest historical notice which we have of Idumea carries us back nearly four thousand years. It occurs in the Bible account of the marauding expedition of Chedorlaomer. Among the tribes which suffered from his arms on that occasion were "the Horites, in their Mount Seir."\* The name of the Horites has been variously explained. The analogy of similar Bible names would induce us to trace it to the chieftain who, with his tribe or family, first settled there, and whose name (Hor) is perpetuated in the mountain now under our eye on which Aaron afterwards died; while the name of his son or descendant, Seir, was applied to the entire region in which the Horites dwelt. The name Horite, however, means a "cave-dweller," and the inference has been drawn, that the original inhabitants of Edom dwelt in caves, and received their designation from this circumstance. The honey-combed condition of Petra, as well as of the entire district, to a less extent, would seem to favour this solution.

These aboriginal settlers, however, were superseded at an early period by the posterity of Esau, as the more northern Canaanitish tribes were the descendants of his brother Jacob.† But the occupation of Idumea by its new claimants was probably gradual; so that some of the Horite chiefs mentioned in the Bible were doubtless contemporaneous with some of

\* Gen. xiv. 6, compare with Gen. xxxvi. 20, 21.

† Deut. ii. 12; Gen. xxxvi. 6—8.

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the Edomite dukes named in the same record; in the same manner as numerous Philistines and Canaanites survived the Conquest, and became gradually incorporated with the Israelites. The regal form of government seems to have been adopted among the Edomites long before the election of a king in Israel; but the line was not hereditary, nor is there any evidence that a metropolitan city had at that date been chosen for the fixed royal residence. Perhaps they were merely, like the judges in Israel, great chieftains raised up from time to time by the exigencies of the times. At the period of the Exodus, it is clear that the Edomites were a strong people, and that they occupied the mountain range extending from the territories of Moab to the Red Sea. When the travel-worn Hebrews had penetrated to Kadesh Barnea on their way to the Promised Land, they applied to their kinsmen for permission to pass through their territories.\* This request was peremptorily refused, and armed resistance was threatened in case the Israelites attempted to force a passage. In consequence of this hostile demonstration of the Edomites, who were probably strong in numbers as in position, the wandering tribes had to return to the Red Sea, and pursue the more eastern route to Palestine.

Three centuries and a half now elapse before we catch another glimpse of this people, when we see Saul carrying on a successful war against them. At a later period, David made himself master of their country; † while Solomon established at Ezion-geber—a trading port on the Red Sea—a naval station, whence he despatched his fleets to Ophir.‡ The caravan route to this eastern emporium of commerce lay through the streets of this wonderful city, which had then probably reached a high state of populousness and prosperity. In spite of several attempts to recover their independence, the Edomites continued in subjection to the Jewish monarchs until the reign of Jehoram, when they successfully revolted and made themselves a king.§ Fifty years later, the city at our feet was the theatre of a fearful slaughter. Amaziah, having defeated the Edomite army at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, advanced upon Petra, into which he forced his way, through some of the awful defiles which we have

\* Numb. xx. 14—21.

† 1 Kings ix. 26—28.

+ 1 Chron. xviii. 13; Gen. xxvii. 40.

‡ 2 Chron. xxi. 8—10.



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been contemplating, and secured possession of this vast natural stronghold. Its name was now changed to Joktheel. The conqueror, perhaps with a view to conciliate his haughty tributaries, and certainly with a flagrant dereliction of fealty towards Jehovah, conveyed some of the gods of the children of Seir to Jerusalem, where he worshipped and served them. Such an idolatrous career could not prosper: accordingly we find that the ascendancy of Judah speedily came to an end. In the reign of Ahaz, the Edomites not only threw off their yoke, but made inroads upon Judea, and carried away captives. And during the gradual decadence of the Jewish state, the reinvigorated Edomites became the successful rivals of the Hebrews, extending both their trade and their territories at the expense of their former lords. This was especially the case at the period of the Captivity, when they took possession of that considerable region in the south of Palestine, afterwards known as Idumea.

After the return of the Jews, the ancient national animosity between the family of Jacob and the family of Esau broke out in new contests; and several victories were gained over the latter by the Maccabean chieftains, which issued in their incorporation with the Jewish nation. It was even from an Idumean family that the Herodian dynasty proceeded, under whose reign Palestine for a season recovered much of its ancient glory and prosperity.

But whilst the Edomites, under the name of Idumeans, had been extending their dominions towards the north, a powerful nomadic Arabian tribe—the Nabatheans—were gradually expelling them from their southern cities and pasturages. It was thus that Petra, at some unknown date, was lost to its ancient masters. The Nabatheans were the descendants of Nebajoth, one of the sons of Ishmael, which became a very wide-spread race, and gradually established the kingdom of Arabia Petræa, which subsisted in nominal independence till reduced by Trajan to the Roman sway. We obtain some few glimpses of the vicissitudes of this city in the pages of Josephus and Diodorus, during the Nabathean dominion. Antigonus, one of Alexander's successors, after reducing Syria and Palestine, sent an expedition against this mountain fastness: Athenus, its leader, succeeded in surprising Petra during the absence of the men at a mask; but

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was, in his turn, surprised, and routed with great loss; and, on a second attack, the inhabitants, being forewarned, placed their wealth in a place of security, and dispersed into the hiding-places of the mountains. What a scene of excitement and terror, of hurry and confusion, must this now silent and deserted realm have presented on that occasion! Subsequently to this, Petra flourished under a succession of native kings, the common name of whom was Aretas, or Obodas. Some of them stand out prominently during the reign of Herod the Great, with whose history they were much mixed up.

The amount of merchandise which passed through this desert depôt was, probably, never greater than at this period, and just after its conquest by the Romans, which took place at the beginning of the second century. Most of the more splendid of the monuments are also generally ascribed to this era of prosperity, and serve to indicate the wealth and refinement of its inhabitants. The cause of the increased traffic of this period may probably be found in the circumstance that the lawless rapacity of the surrounding marauding hordes was repressed by Roman energy, and particularly by the military garrisons which were established along the caravan route from the Red Sea to Palestine. The country was thus rendered more accessible, and the passage of merchant-men more secure.

In the early centuries of the Christian era, the benign faith of the Cross spread through these desert solitudes, and Petra became the metropolitan see of an extensive district. At length, the fiery Crescent swept through these echoing defiles, and Christian communities melted away before the sanguinary fanaticism of the followers of the Prophet of Mecca. Here we lose sight of Petra; it now became the prey of rapacious Arab hordes, who used it as a shelter and hiding-place; and in the possession of their descendants it has continued to the present hour. A transient glimpse of the old rock-fortress is caught during the campaigns of the Crusaders; but from that remote period to our own time, the very name and site of Petra has passed out of human memory. So that the discovery of the city by Burckhardt, in 1812, excited almost as much wonder and interest as the resurrection of the city of Sen-nacherib from the grave of twenty centuries.

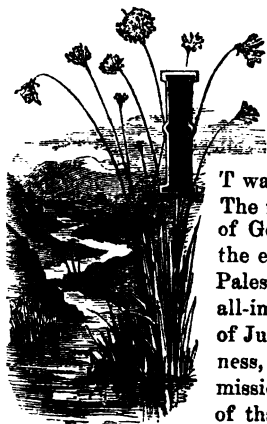
Gazing abroad upon the desolations of the fallen city

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cannot fail to discern the inscriptions of Divine retribution alike upon tomb, and temple, and palace. "Nothing," said a noble visitor, "can exceed the desolation of its present condition, although the signs of its former wealth and power are so durable as to have remained many centuries after it was deserted, and they look as if as many more may pass over them without working any visible change. The fulfilment of the prophecies has been most wonderful; for although it was beyond the foresight of man to imagine that so opulent and powerful a city should be deserted and desolate, yet all human works and habitations are subject to a like fate; but the words, 'I will make thee small among the heathen,' have been actually accomplished to such a degree that the very site of Petra was for centuries unknown. That a great city should be thus swept from the memory of man, and blotted out for a long season from the knowledge of the world, is a most striking manifestation of the truth of the prophetic record, and utterly exceeded all human foresight and sagacity. But every step in this region exhibits some wonderful accomplishment of the doom which was pronounced while it was flowing with riches and teeming with inhabitants: every specific misfortune has overtaken this devoted kingdom, and yet there are innumerable remains of what it once was."

Taking out our pocket Bible, and searching for the denunciations uttered against this once proud capital, we are astonished at the literal accuracy with which they have been fulfilled; and the remarkable words of Stephens, suggested by a similar survey to ours, rush to our minds; and with their citation we will close this narrative. "I would," says he, "that the sceptic could stand as I did, among the ruins of this city amidst the rocks, and there open the sacred book and read the words of the inspired penman, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ruined city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as that of one risen from the dead: though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the hand-writing of God himself in the desolation and eternal ruin around him."

THE  
EARLY COMPANIONS OF THE SAVIOUR;  
BEING  
MEMOIRS OF THE APOSTLES.



'T was a stirring time in the-land of Israel. The river Jordan, where of old the hand of God had wrought its first wonders on the entrance of the children of Israel into Palestine, had again become the scene of all-important events. From the wilderness of Judea, the austere preacher of righteousness, whose very appearance betokened his mission, had betaken himself to the banks of that sacred stream, and, in consequence, that desert region had become all alive

with eager visitors, whose motive was either curiosity or spiritual inquiry. What a scene presented itself to the view of a spectator arriving from the metropolis! For hours he had passed over burning sandy plains, through narrow defiles, and along the dry beds of rivulets, where every aspect of nature was desolate and dreary. At last he reaches the brow of a hill, in many places covered with reeds. Beneath, there stretches the second or lower bank of Jordan, whose immediate vicinity has called forth a luxuriant vegetation. On the other side of the river is Bethabara—the place of fords; and that concourse of people, visible in the distance,

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is gathered round John and his disciples. They have come to be baptised of him; and from him they have heard of their disease and its remedy—of their sin and of the coming Saviour.

It must have been something extraordinary which could have attracted these crowds from Jerusalem, from Judea, from Galilee, and from the other side of Jordan. The fact that the "voice of one crying in the wilderness, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," should have been so generally responded to, has no parallel in history. Men, women, and children flocked around him, and for a time it would seem as if that tree, to whose root the axe had been laid, were destined to send forth fresh shoots. Such was the general excitement that it even reached the Jewish aristocracy. The circle, so narrow and so closely drawn, which separated the learned of Israel in their pride and exclusiveness from the rest of the world, seemed for once to open up. Where only questions of form and logical niceties were usually discussed, a question full of life and reality was for once entertained. The Pharisees and Scribes contemplated even the idea of the possibility of a kingdom of God, not in pomp and splendour, but in humility and repentance; not amidst the palaces of Jerusalem, but on the desert banks of Jordan. They despatched a deputation to inquire whether the Baptist was *he* to whom the hope of Israel pointed.

A short time only had elapsed since the startling message, which had penetrated even within "the Hall of Polished Stones" (as the meeting-place of the Sanhedrim was called), had been delivered. The deputation from Jerusalem had come and was gone, bearing with them the striking reply of the Baptist. They had not even seen a single miracle, save that of a man denying himself, and willing to occupy a place lower than his who unloosed the latchet of his Master's shoes. "Next day"—that is, the day after John's trial of faithfulness, and when, perhaps, many of the crowd had gone away with the deputation from Jerusalem—Jesus came to be baptised; and then it was that the heavenly voice and vision pointed out, in the person of the meek and lowly Nazarene, God's well-beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased.

We purposely abstain from dwelling more fully on a scene which appears most solemn and striking in the simple narra-

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tive as communicated by the Evangelists. After the baptism of Jesus, and probably on the same day on which that event took place, John declared to his disciples that the Messiah had at last come. Unknown, he had approached him; but the Spirit of God had descended on him, and the voice from heaven had revealed his character and his office. We can readily conceive how the remainder of that day was spent in Bethabara. Subsequent events show what deep impression the narrative had made on the souls of the listeners. Was He to appear again? or was it true, as their Rabbins said, that Messiah was to remain concealed in Galilee, until of a sudden, when his presence became absolutely requisite, he would appear for the deliverance of his people? Were they to see him again here, in Galilee, or at Jerusalem? or how was he to accomplish the great work committed to him? So much only they knew—and it was sufficient to know this—that he was to take away the sins of the people, and that they were implicitly to listen to and obey his voice. Day and night passed amidst such conversation. “Next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as he walked (probably on his return to Galilee), he saith, Behold the Lamb of God.” The resolution of those to whom he addressed these words was quickly taken: they consulted not with flesh and blood. “And the two disciples heard him speak, and they *followed Jesus*.” These two disciples—the first of Christ’s followers and his first apostles—were Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, and John, the beloved disciple.

## THE CALLING OF THE APOSTLES.

With the baptism of Christ commenced his public ministry. He now showed himself openly. The first of his public acts was the choice of followers. Two qualifications only seemed essential in those who were afterwards to be his witnesses. Theirs must be a simple submission, and an unqualified reception, with respect to his claims and his teaching. On these grounds, learning, in the common Jewish acceptance of the term, would have rather proved an impediment than an advantage. Jewish learning was a development of the letter; it elaborated the form. It had all to be unlearned before a man could become a follower of Jesus. A learned apostle would have had as many difficulties to overcome—especially at

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first, during the life-time of Christ—as he had imbibed rabbinical principles. Besides, what was required of the apostles was not independently to develop the truth in accordance with their own peculiar tendencies and mental prepossessions, but faithfully to reflect the mind of the Saviour. Those were best suited for this work, who with the deepest earnestness combined a sincere longing for the kingdom of God in its spiritual aspects; who were ready simply and unhesitatingly to submit themselves to Christ and his teaching. Their souls needed to be soft and ductile to receive the impress which they were afterwards to stamp upon the church.

On the other hand, it was extremely desirable that, while all shared the qualities which we have indicated, there should exist amongst them a diversity of natural character. The presence of different elements in their disposition would not only exhibit the universal suitableness and adaptation of the gospel, but bring its leading provisions more prominently into view. A difference of circumstances might also be of use, although in a more subordinate manner. In point of fact, we notice that these differences did obtain amongst the apostles; and, although we possess comparatively few records of some of them, yet what we know of the rest serves to show that they were all men of *marked* and *decided* character, and represented the leading differences of natural disposition. A sufficient diversity of circumstances and previous training also existed amongst them to bring out the varied operation of the gospel on men naturally disposed and socially placed so differently. Only one trait had they in common, and that was a deep unalterable confidence in and attachment to Christ. They were in this respect much like that deep blue lake of Gennesareth, which reflected so brightly on its bosom every object. They simply reflected Christ.

How wonderful the internal and external harmony between the apostles! Nothing short of the training to which they were subjected could have produced it. Before we enter into a detailed account of their lives and labours, we shall briefly trace their preparation and activity. We have already noted that two of John's disciples—Andrew and John—were those who first followed Jesus from Jordan into Galilee. By trade, both were fishermen, who plied their calling on the Lake of Galilee. Their circumstances, however, like their

natural dispositions, were very different. John seems to have been comparatively wealthy and influential; not so the sons of Jonas. It may appear strange that the disciples, like the Master, should have been Galileans; but in many respects the northernmost province of Palestine seemed best fitted to become the scene of Christ's labours. In saying this we do not refer so much to the natural beauties of Galilee, to the grandeur of its mountain ranges, and the fertility of its plains, as to the character and circumstances of its inhabitants.

Divided into Upper and Lower Galilee—the former also known as “Galilee of the Gentiles,” on account of the many heathens who had settled there—both districts were in continual contact with the Gentile world. The former, mountainous and bold, was not only contiguous with Syria, but bordered also on Phœnicia, with its important sea-ports. Lower Galilee, more plain in its conformation, was, perhaps, one of the loveliest and most fertile spots on the earth. The great highway for agricultural and other produce, the main artery of commerce ran through the middle of it. The Galileans were indeed looked down upon by the inhabitants of Judea as rude and unlettered in rabbinical lore, and their very pronunciation of the Hebrew formed a theme of never-failing ridicule. But if they had less formalism, they were only the more fitted to receive the kingdom of God. The further they stood from the circle at Jerusalem, the better for their spiritual interests. Their manners were more simple, and even the Rabbins had to own that there was much of moral earnestness about them. Like mountaineers generally, they were brave, diligent, hardy, and honest. Their affections had not become petrified in the Jewish schools, nor had their enthusiasm evaporated in endless ceremonies. The solitude of their towering mountains, as they gradually sloped into cultivated hills; their romantic valleys, so fruitful and smiling, and dotted with villages and towns (of which Galilee contained not less than 404); their immense plains, on which large flocks were browsing; and, above all, that crystal lake, with the enchanting scenery, the fertile valleys, and the flourishing towns all around it—pointed it out as the most desirable place of residence, the most retired and yet the busiest, and the most eligible place of operation both for Christ and his apostles.

Andrew and John had followed Jesus towards Galilee.



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the road they met with Simon, Andrew's brother, probably in search of the Baptist. They told him whom they had found. They, moreover, brought him to Jesus, and Simon became a Cephas, or Peter. Another Galilean, a fellow townsman of Andrew and Peter, was called during this memorable journey. Like the sons of Jonas, Philip was a native of Bethsaida (the city of fishes), a village near Capernaum, and about two miles from the western bank of the lake which supplied the means of livelihood to most of its inhabitants. In turn, Philip brought Nathanael. The latter, better known as Bartholomew, (Bar-Thalmi, the son of Thalmi, just as Peter is sometimes called Bar-Jona, the son of Jonas), was a native of Cana, a village of Galilee. Here, then, we have the calling of the first six disciples; for we can scarcely doubt that John had speedily acquainted his brother James with the discovery he had made on the banks of Jordan. The two sons of Jonas—Andrew and Simon Peter; the two sons of Zebedee—John and James; Philip and Nathanael, or Bartholomew, were those first called. But as, throughout, their spiritual development was slow and gradual, so also was their calling. They came to him before they followed him; they followed him before they announced his advent; they heralded his coming before they declared his power and his truth. There are, indeed, various stages, both in their spiritual and in their apostolical history, which are broadly marked.

After their call on the journey to Galilee,\* the disciples seem to have returned to their homes and former avocations. Christ was driven by the Spirit into the wilderness; they were driven into the world. It was needful for Christ to be alone; it was needful for them to be once more on the Sea of Galilee, in their boats, with their nets, or in their homes. Each party had to be prepared for the peculiar work devolving upon it. This having been done, Jesus returned into Galilee. Meanwhile, the Tetrarch of Galilee, Herod Antipas, the son of Herod I, (for Galilee was still under Jewish domination), had imprisoned John for his faithfulness in the solemn rebuke which he had felt impelled to administer to this princely sinner. In fact, John appears only to have exercised his ministry for a few months. So briefly was that burning light allowed to shed a passing lustre on the darkness of the age. But a greater than he

\* John i. 35—46.

was at hand. Jesus himself now proclaimed the kingdom of God, and one of his first acts was again to call around him his former disciples, and to add others, till their number swelled to twelve—the number of tribes into which the Lord had of old divided his chosen people. They were now set free from all their worldly engagements and cares,\* and were henceforth to be wholly devoted to the service of Christ and the spread of his kingdom. But if they were afterwards to become *apostles*, they had first to be *disciples*. They had to learn, to become as little children, and so to receive Christ, before they could teach or rule. In this stage of their spiritual history we distinguish two periods, which, although not indicated in so many words in the gospel history, are marked with sufficient distinctness. In the first, there was indeed the same surrender and dependence which marked the second; but its principle and meaning was different. It was more of an *outward* dependence; a legal submission—a kind of servitude. But this was only the preparation for the second stage, that of *inward* dependence, and of love and obedience from it—of spiritual affinity and friendship. The Lord himself refers to this when he saith: “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”† Perhaps the missionary journey on which the Lord sent them and the seventy disciples‡ may have formed the boundary line between these two periods. At any rate, the words, the prayer, and the general dealing with the disciples, recorded in Luke x. 18—24, seem to indicate some such transition.

Hitherto the disciples had only learned; they were now to commence teaching. Yet how simple and plain were their duties in this respect. Theirs it was only to proclaim what they had seen and heard—to make announcement of the advent of the kingdom. And as their duties, so their preparation for them was vastly different from that of the scholars in rabbinical colleges. The latter were slowly and gradually advanced from standing or sitting on the floor “at the feet” of the Rabbi, to occupy the last seats amongst the “scholars”; and again from seat to seat, and from row to row, till at last the imposition of hands authorised them either to teach or to decide on disputed points—“to bind and to loose,” to declare a thing obligatory or

\* Matt. iv. 18—22.

† John v. 15.

‡ Luke ix. 7.

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non-obligatory, or to perform both functions. A tenacious memory, an untiring diligence, readiness, logical acumen, and the closest observance of the traditions of the elders, were deemed the grounds for promotion in the Jewish schools. Without doubt, the Rabbins gathered around them some of the noblest, most talented, ardent, and zealous amongst the youth of Israel. But how speedily were their minds contracted, their energies cramped, and their affections blunted! Rabbinism was, in truth, the scholasticism of the synagogue, and the Rabbins were its order of Jesuits, only with more honesty and less cunning about them than belong to the disciples of Loyola.

On the other hand, how different the discipline to which the followers of Jesus submitted themselves! With few and short interruptions, Jesus was always with them, and shone with unclouded beauty into their souls. Except in spring and summer, when all Israelites had to appear at Jerusalem, he remained generally with them in Galilee, going from place to place to teach and to heal. They lived on terms of the most unreserved intimacy with their Master. If all he said was not understood by them, it was not their *intellectual*, but their *spiritual* development which was at fault. Besides, they could ask him about the meaning of what appeared dark or difficult. He did not withdraw from them in haughtiness, as did the Rabbins. There was no mystery for the common people, or for the unlettered; nothing which the initiated alone could know; no secret or merely speculative doctrine. They accompanied him whithersoever he went; they were present at his conversations with individuals, and his discourses to the multitude; they witnessed the opposition which he encountered, and heard the objections which were raised; they saw, and in part experienced, the miracles which he performed; their friendships were his, as his were theirs. On one occasion they were even entrusted with an important mission, and endowed with supernatural powers. Still it was only slowly that they advanced, and not without many misgivings. In truth, they do not seem to have passed much beyond a historical faith in his mission and claims, an attachment and devotedness to his person, and a sense of their need of his guidance and teaching.

While the above holds true with reference to all the twelve, there was an inner circle formed of those who stood nearest to

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Christ. It cannot be doubted that *pre-eminence* attached to some, although any idea of *supremacy* is entirely opposed to the whole spirit and scope of the gospel. This distinction was not conferred on *one*, but on *three* of the disciples—on Peter, John, and James. They saw, learnt, and felt more than the others. The peculiar grounds of this pre-eminence (in a subordinate sense) were those natural peculiarities and that spiritual progress which we shall, by and by, trace more fully. When at last the Lord Jesus was delivered into the hands of his enemies, according to prediction, as the Shepherd was smitten, the flock was scattered. Still they seem to have lingered about the place of his departure, expecting further direction. And they were not disappointed.

With the pentecostal effusion commenced also the *apostolate*, in the strictest sense of the term. That designation, so familiar to the Jews ("Shelichin"—apostles—parties sent), indicated that they had held *personal intercourse* with Christ, and had received a *personal and special commission* from him. With the sermon of Peter we enter on the first stage of apostolical activity. Its sphere was not only confined to Palestine, but specially to its Jewish inhabitants. The gospel was, however, soon carried to Samaria. Rapidly it spread through the length and breadth of the land, and multitudes became obedient to the faith. But as yet the church was a strictly national and Jewish community; in fact, the early believers even joined with their brethren in the observance of many temple rites. The vision of Peter and his mission to Cornelius initiated the second stage in the history of the apostles, when the Gentiles were admitted to share with the Jews in the blessings of the gospel. The third stage commences with the increasing unbelief and hardening on the part of the Jews—their rejection of the counsel of God against themselves, and the call of Paul to the apostolate. Henceforth, the gospel came *chiefly* to the Gentiles, amongst whom churches were formed, distinct from the synagogues; and throughout the then known world were the glad tidings of a risen Saviour carried by a zealous and devoted band, consisting partly of the apostles, and partly of their immediate successors and disciples.

Having thus, in general, traced the calling and activity of the apostles, we proceed to give brief memoirs of each of them, so far as the scanty historical records enable us to do so.

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first in the faith were, as already indicated, Andrew and John, representatives of the families of Jonas and Zebedee. We shall commence our sketches with the lives of

### ANDREW AND SIMON, THE SONS OF JONAS.

According to the statement of Josephus, the Lake of Genesareth derives its name from the country adjoining it. The Rabbins explain the name as "Gene-Sarim," or "gardens of the nobility," the country around being so fertile, salubrious, and beautiful, that the principal inhabitants of Palestine resorted to it during the summer. Its vicinity was said to be dotted with villas and covered with gardens. Besides its natural attractions, the hot sulphureous springs at its southern extremity were resorted to by invalids in cases of cutaneous, rheumatic, and gouty affections. The description which Josephus furnishes \* is so graphic, and agrees so closely with the reports of modern travellers, that we cannot refuse giving extracts from it. Speaking of the lake, he says: "Its waters are sweet, and very agreeable for drinking. The lake is also pure, and on every side ends directly at the shores and at the sand. It is also of a temperate nature when you draw it up, of a more gentle nature than river or fountain water, and yet always cooler than one could expect. Now, when this water is kept in the open air, it is as cold as that snow which the country people are accustomed to make by night in summer. There are several kinds of fish in it, different both to the taste and the sight from those elsewhere. . . . . The country also that lies over against this lake is wonderful from its nature and beauty. Its soil is so fruitful that all sorts of trees can grow upon it, for the temperature of the air is so well mixed that it agrees very well with those several sorts, particularly walnuts, which require the coldest air. There are palm trees also, which grow best in hot air; fig trees also and olives grow near them, which yet require an air that is more temperate. One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together. . . . . It not only nourishes different sorts of autumnal fruit beyond men's expectation, but preserves them a great while; it supplies men with the principal fruits, with grapes and figs con-

\* Jewish Wars, iii. ch. x. 7, 8.

tinually during ten months of the year, and the rest of the fruits as they become ripe together, through the whole year."

To this glowing description, which is confirmed in rabbinical writings, we shall only add a few other particulars. Situated in the province of Galilee, and in the former possession of Naphtali, the lake of Galilee, no doubt, owes its depression below the level of the Mediterranean to volcanic agency. The hot sulphureous springs, to which we have referred, are another trace of its presence. This depression is estimated, by a recent authority, to amount to 535 feet below the level of the sea. The lake itself is about six hours long, and less than two broad. In its sweet and delicious waters, an immense number and great variety of fishes are found; some belonging to species known in our own country; others to those which are found in the Nile. On either side, its shores are bounded by mountain ranges, mostly of the chalk formation, which rise boldly and abruptly on the eastern side to a height of from 800 to 1000 feet, and on the western from 400 to 500 feet. The lake, as many others similarly environed, is often visited by sudden and violent squalls, which are extremely dangerous to the small craft which navigate it. The inhabitants of the cities and villages along its shores and in its neighbourhood were mostly supported by fishing. The very name of the village in which Jonas and his two sons, Andrew and Peter, lived, indicates this. Bethsaida—the home or city of fishes—lay on the western shore of the lake of Galilee, and at no great distance from Capernaum.

Like most of the other inhabitants of Bethsaida, Jonas and his two sons were fishermen. It need scarcely be remarked, that in a country which possessed fish in such variety and abundance, it formed one of the staple articles of consumption. Indeed, although fishes were not offered in sacrifice by any nation, almost all\* used it as an article of food. Fishes were even adored by some, and amongst others the Phœnician deity, Dagon, was in reality piscine. At the time to which our narrative refers, the Jews considered fish as one of the greatest delicacies. The writings of the Rabbins show

\* According to Plutarch, some nations abstained from eating fish. Herodotus informs us that in Egypt the priests were interdicted the use of f

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that, although within the legal restrictions, \* both fresh water and sea fish were largely used, and prepared in different ways, for the table, the festive board of a wealthy Israelite would present large and small river and sea fish, boiled or broiled, raw (probably sun-dried) or salted, pickled or in sauce. The same authorities inform us that every person was allowed to fish on the lake of Galilee, although it was forbidden to put up stake-nets, which might have obstructed the navigation. In fishing, nets of various sizes and kinds—amongst others, a basket and a drag-net—and hooks were used. Angling, by means of a rod, was also known. A peculiar mode of preserving fish alive consisted in passing a ring, connected with a line, through its jaws, and then submerging it again under water. Sea fish were chiefly imported into Palestine by the Phœnicians. In Jerusalem there was a special fishmarket, situate probably near to the “fish-gate.”

Such, then, was the occupation in which Jonas and his sons were engaged. It does not seem that the family were in affluent circumstances. On the contrary, from all the narratives of the Evangelists it would appear that the sons of Jonas were dependent on these exertions for the means of livelihood. From a statement in Luke's Gospel † we gather that the sons of Jonas were in partnership with other fishermen, and that together they possessed two fishing vessels, in which they plied their trade, as usual in those climates, chiefly during the night. From Mark ‡ we learn, in confirmation of the above account of their circumstances, that Simon and Andrew together occupied one house, in which also Simon's mother-in-law—for that apostle was married—resided. We have already indicated in what manner Andrew and Peter became acquainted with Jesus, and how, on their return from Jordan to Galilee, they resumed, for a time, their former employment. It was only after the miraculous draught of fishes, succeeding a night of fruitless toil, § that “they forsook all and followed him.”

Further notices of Andrew are scarce, but not without importance. We have learned to know him as one who, before the appearance of the Saviour, had waited for the kingdom of God. When the voice of the Baptist sounded the note of preparation, Andrew had hastened to Jordan—in this

\* Lev. xi. 9.

† Luke v. 1—7.

‡ Mark i. 29, 30.

§ Luke v.

instance, apparently, outrunning even the zeal of Peter—and had become one of John's disciples. No sooner had he been made acquainted with the person of the Saviour than, unsummoned, except by the call from within, he had, in company with the like-minded son of Zebedee, followed the Lord. And when at last Jesus bade him become a "fisher of men," he had, without questioning or doubting, given up his little worldly all to go he knew not where, save that it was to learn of Him who was meek and lowly in heart.

His after-course, as far as recorded, confirms our first impressions of his character. Without the fiery and sometimes rash zeal of his brother, Andrew had a deep and abiding trust and attachment to the Saviour. The distinguishing feature of his spiritual history seems to have been a *quiet waiting* for the Lord. His unbounded confidence led him to expect that Jesus *might* do *any* thing; yet was his faith not so strong and pointed as to induce him to anticipate that he *would* do a *particular* thing. This feature comes out strikingly in the narrative of the miraculous provision for the multitude.\* On that occasion, Philip could not see any mode of furnishing food for all who were present. The possibility of it seems never to have come before his mind. "Two hundred pennyworth of bread" would not suffice for the scantiest meal. It is then that Andrew, of his own accord, suggests that a lad in the company had "five barley loaves and two small fishes;" but, adds he, "what are they among so many?" This observation is peculiarly characteristic of Andrew. He believed that the Lord was *able*—that he *might* with this small provision feed the five thousand present; but his faith was not sufficiently pointed and special to expect that he *would* do it.

Another characteristic incident occurred on the last journey to Jerusalem, when Philip and Andrew presented the Grecian proselytes to Jesus.† These parties had addressed themselves, in the first place, to Philip. That disciple did not venture to go directly to Jesus, but consulted his friend Andrew, who accompanied him to the Saviour. This incident shows also the peculiar relationship which subsisted between these two disciples, and that Andrew, although not one of the three who formed the innermost circle, stood nearest to them. Accordingly, Andrew, along with Peter, John, and James, is

\* John vi. 5—14.

† John xii. 20—22.



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one of those who "asked him privately, when all these things should be fulfilled."\* His name occurs once more after the death and resurrection of the Lord, in the record of those who, together, occupied "the upper room" in Jerusalem, where they "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." Andrew was, indeed, as his name indicates, a *strong man*; but his faith was probably more passive than active. Leaving the inspired record, tradition states that Andrew afterwards preached the gospel in Scythia, in Achaia, in Asia Minor, and even in Thracia. He is said to have at last sealed his testimony with his blood, being affixed to a cross of a peculiar shape x, the "*crux decussata*," since known as the "St. Andrew's cross."

The history of Peter, Andrew's brother, is given at much greater length in the New Testament. From the moment when the Lord first saw him, he gave him the epithet of Cephas, or Peter—that is, rock—with reference both to his spiritual character, and the position which he was to occupy in the church. Naturally quick and ardent, Peter was not the man to do things by halves. He threw his whole soul into every action. Engrossed with the object before him, he was apt in the engagement of the time to forget everything else. The rapidity with which he received impressions, his natural ardour and self-confidence, however, often led him astray. The qualities which peculiarly fitted him for extensive usefulness were thus, as is often the case, also the occasions of danger to him. He was ever the first among the disciples to understand, to feel, or to do.† Hence the prominent rank which he necessarily occupied both in and out of the church. We need scarcely stop to notice the forced construction which some have attempted to put on expressions of the Saviour, addressed to Peter, as indicating his supremacy over the rest. Not a trace of this is to be found either in the teaching of the Lord or in the subsequent history of the early church. The privileges accorded to Peter in Matt. xvi. 18, 19, are subsequently† extended to all the disciples. Besides, the expressions "loosing" and "binding" bore, as before hinted, to a Jewish mind, only the meaning of declaring "lawful" or "unlawful." We do not indeed deny the *prominence* of Peter, due to his natural disposition and his spiritual development, nor the *pre-eminence*

\* Mark xiii. 3, 4.

† Matt. xviii. 18.

which he shared with John and James. But every other claim seems wholly unfounded, and the appeal to Scripture on its behalf is one of those after thoughts by which preconceived ideas are brought to bear on plain statements, and logical acumen is used as a substitute for plain interpretation.

Throughout, Peter's character is clear and almost transparent. His warm attachment to Christ, his ardent feelings, his rashness and boldness, all come out without reserve. But the point of greatest interest to us, as it was of greatest importance to him, is his full trust in the Saviour, and entire dependence on him. It was he who, as spokesman of the others, replied to Christ's query, "Will ye also go away?" in those impressive words of childlike need and confidence, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."\* Again, it was Peter who, in Cesarea Philippi, confessed to him, and received this testimony: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."† So also was it Peter whom the Lord took with him to the mount of transfiguration,‡ in company with the sons of Zebedee; and again chose as one of the witnesses of his bloody agony in the garden of Gethsemane.§

But, on the other hand, as on the former occasion he said he wist not what, and on the latter could not watch with him even one hour, so his precipitancy and self-confidence caused his failure on other occasions. Thus when Peter sees the Lord walking on the water,|| he demands that permission should be given him "to come unto him." It is granted; and Peter forthwith sets out on his perilous journey, while the rest look with mingled apprehension and wonderment from the deck of their storm-tossed vessel at the venturous disciple. For a time all seems to go well. He thinks only of Jesus, and is safe. But now, as wave follows wave, and the boisterous wind almost lays bare the foundations of the mighty deep, he is again wholly engrossed with the scene and the dangers around. He fears, and already begins to sink, when once more his mind wholly reverts to Christ, and he cries out, "Lord, save me." His prayer is heard and answered, although his unbelief is rebuked. A signal type, this, of the spiritual history of

\* John vi. 67—69. † Matt. xvi. 16, 17. ‡ Matt. xvii. † Matt. xxvi. 37.

|| Matt. xiv. 22—31.

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Peter! In a manner somewhat similar, Peter, unable to understand the purpose of Christ's sufferings, ventured to rebuke him when he referred to his approaching decease.\* Again, it was he who rashly, and without consulting the Master, paid the tribute money as for an ordinary man.†

During the last days of Christ's sojourn on earth, Peter is again conspicuous amongst the disciples. It is he who at first refuses to allow Christ to wash his feet, and, when the meaning of the act is explained to him, is ready to go to the opposite extreme.‡ It is he who declares his readiness to cleave to him to the end, though all others should forsake him, and even to lay down his life for him.§ It is Peter who cuts off the ear of the High Priest's servant in the garden, and follows the Lord into the judgment-hall. The events which there took place are too well known to require repetition. Probably it was not till the Master had looked round on him who had thrice denied him, under circumstances which ought to have inspired courage into a generous mind, that Peter understood either the greatness of his fall or of his weakness: yet was it only temporary, and after he had gone out and "wept bitterly," he speedily recovered himself.¶ Never for a moment did he forsake the assembly of the disciples. The resurrection morning found him in company with them, and so certain was he of the forgiveness and love of the Saviour, although no word of it could possibly have reached him, that he was the first to run to the grave, and to stoop into the empty tomb. It was to *him* the Lord appeared after his resurrection, and it was from him that he elicited the thrice-repeated assurance of his attachment as he thrice commissioned him to do his work.

The book of Acts brings Peter still more prominently before us. It is he who proposes to add another to the number of the disciples in room of him who had gone to his own place.|| The heart-stirring appeal to those who had "by wicked hands crucified and slain" Jesus, by means of which "about 3000 souls were added" to the church, was made by Peter.¶ He next appears doing miracles in the temple, and preaching Christ to the wondering multitude.\*\* Although now dragged before the Sanhedrim, he and John are not daunted;

\* Matt. xvi. 23. † Matt. xvii. 24 to end. ‡ John xiii. 1-10.

‡ John xiii. 36 to end. || Acts i. 13. ¶ Acts ii. 14-40. \*\* Acts i. i.

but, in the face of their threats, they declare their determination to "speak of the things which they had both seen and heard." The same energy he displays in the church. Those who "lie unto God" are speedily destroyed by the hand of the Lord at his word.\* The firmness and sober zeal which characterise Peter since his fall, restoration, and the remarkable events connected with it, continue to manifest themselves in his after-course. Amidst the many "signs and wonders" done by the apostles in the name of Jesus, Peter's activity is so distinguished, that from all the neighbourhood of Jerusalem the sick and distressed are conveyed to the city and placed in a position "that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them," and all that are brought unto him are healed. We can readily conceive what impression this daily testimony to Christ, by word and deed, must have produced in Jerusalem. In point of fact, Rabbinical authorities acknowledge that such miraculous cures were performed, and their repeated denunciations of those who availed themselves of that benefit show that, as might have been expected, this argument in favour of Christ was felt to be telling.

Stung to the quick by the progress of the gospel, which they could not arrest, the Sanhedrim again incarcerate the apostles. But in vain do the prison-doors close upon them. By night the hand of the angel opens them, and next morning the officers find an empty prison, while the apostles are preaching in the temple. They are brought again before the highest Jewish tribunal to answer for disobedience to the former injunction of the Sanhedrim. In a semi-circle, the Nasi or president in the middle, the Ab-beth-din (head of the College of Justice) or vice-president at his right, the Chacham (wise man) or chief of the assembled fathers at his left, sat the sages of Israel; at either end of the semi-circle a clerk noted down the proceedings and the votes of the council. The offence with which the apostles were charged was two-fold. They had—as in a former instance, and in neglect of the warning of the Sanhedrim—taught in the name of Jesus. They had proclaimed doctrines which the Sanhedrim had condemned. Again, they had done so in the *temple*. The former offence would be considered a crime against the established religion, and

\* Acts v. 1—11.

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fell within the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim ; the latter was a misdemeanour in the temple, and would properly come under the cognisance of the council of priests, to whom, besides the superintendence of the priests, the supervision of the temple, its rites, police, etc., was entrusted. The High Priest, who was *not ex-officio* president of the Sanhedrim—who might even be wholly excluded from its deliberations—was chief of the council of priests. However, on this occasion, the minor offence was merged in the major : only, as it had been committed in the temple, the High Priest constituted himself principal accuser and examiner.

Before this council, then, stood the apostles. They were unlettered, so far as Jewish law was concerned. The council knew it, and while they hated and despised them, they inwardly marvelled at and took notice of them. The apostles knew it, but they were neither abashed nor afraid. It was difficult to frame the accusation in this case. To moot the question of working miracles might have raised a dispute between the Pharisees and Sadducees ; besides, some in that council pretended to possess similar powers. They were, therefore, only accused of continuing to teach in "that name," although forbidden ; along with the minor charge of raising popular tumults in Jerusalem, and endangering the safety of the council, "filling Jerusalem with this doctrine, and intending to bring this man's blood" upon them. The latter charge was probably meant to form a ground of appeal to the civil power, if the council should decide upon their death. On this occasion, also, Peter replied in the name of the apostles, and that with a dignity and firmness becoming the circumstances.\* At the suggestion of Gamaliel—the grandson of Hillel, and afterwards the president of the Sanhedrim—the apostles were, however, at last allowed to depart from the council, after having been beaten.

Next, we find Peter and John in Samaria, perfecting the work which Philip had commenced.† It was there that he administered the solemn rebuke to Simon Magus, who "thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Simon, although for the moment apparently repentant, went, like Balaam, headlong to perdition. He is said to have been the first heresiarch, and, if tradition speaks

\* Acts v. 29—32.

† Acts viii. 14.

true, he "did much evil" at Rome, where he again encountered Peter, and at last miserably perished.

At first sight it may appear strange that the Jewish believers, who till then had kept so separate from all non-Israelites, should have felt no difficulty in holding religious intercourse with the Samaritans, whom they rightly believed to be of heathen origin, and to practise along with a corrupt Judaism certain heathen rites. But here also the Lord had left them an example, and the Samaritans were now to form the link of connection between the Jews and Gentiles. Besides, opinions varied so frequently with different Rabbins, and at different periods, as to the lawfulness of such intercourse, that we can scarcely wonder that the apostles gladly welcomed the believing Samaritans into the fellowship of the gospel. It was otherwise with the heathens to whom Peter was next sent. It was deemed "an unlawful thing" for a Jew "to keep company" with, or even "to come unto" a Gentile. Peter knew this, and was himself under the influence of these prejudices. With characteristic earnestness he refuses, in the vision,\* "to eat any thing that is common or unclean." With equally characteristic ardour he is afterwards ready, in obedience to the vision, to go with the messengers to the house of the Italian centurion.† It is significant that "the apostle of the circumcision" should have been the first to admit heathens into the fellowship of the church, under the strong impression that *he* dared not refuse the baptism of water to those who had received that of the Holy Ghost.‡ Nor was he ashamed or afraid to defend his conduct at Jerusalem, § or to protect the Gentile converts from the yoke of the law.||

Once more was he exposed to the rage of the Jews. Herod Agrippa had for a short time obtained the possessions of his grandfather Herod. By the favour of the Roman emperor, to whom he had rendered important services, he reigned over the whole of Palestine. To ingratiate himself with his new subjects, Herod had killed James, the brother of John.¶ He now imprisoned Peter, meaning "after Easter to bring him forth to the people." But the Lord would have it otherwise. While the church was engaged in earnest prayer for Peter, the night before he was to be given up to his enemies, while he himself

\* Acts x. 9—18.

† Acts x. 21—23.

‡ Acts x. 47, 48.

§ Acts. xi.

|| Acts xv. 7—11.

¶ Acts xii. 1.

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sweetly rested on the cold floor of the prison, chained to two keepers, the angel of the Lord struck off his fetters; and brought him forth to liberty and usefulness.

After this occurrence, the name of Peter occurs no more in New Testament history, except at the council of Jerusalem,\* and in connection with a characteristic instance of his rashness in Antioch, where he first lived in free intercourse with the Gentile believers, but afterwards, on the arrival of certain Jewish teachers, wholly withdrew from them. On that occasion, Paul felt impelled to administer a reproof to his colleague, which the latter received in the brotherly spirit in which no doubt it had been given.†

Thus much have we said of the *history* of Peter. His Epistles show his spiritual development, and testify how completely he became transformed by grace. All his former unrest has now given place to profound quietude in Christ. Yet when occasion demands it (as in his second epistle), the old earnestness and fire re-appear, only subdued and in subservience to the cause of the gospel. He is now indeed Peter—a rock. Christ is *all* to him—ineffably precious to his soul. He has ripened into a mature Christian, and his natural disposition seems to be wholly leavened by the gospel. These epistles are indeed precious, not only as parts of Scripture, but also as monuments of the transforming power of the gospel, and of the gradual ripening of a soul to perfection, when every thought is brought into subjection to the obedience of the gospel.

It is almost impossible to close this sketch by a reference to what tradition records of the later activity of Peter. The accounts are here so confused and contradictory that it is impossible to reconcile them. Besides, each of them can be shown to be in part contrary to known facts. So much only may we assert, that Peter continued to the end an apostle of the circumcision, and that he devoted himself specially to the “dispersed abroad.” Probably he laboured in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia. He suffered martyrdom, in all probability by crucifixion. It is difficult to hazard an opinion as to his stay at Rome. The testimony of antiquity is so unanimous that he at least *visited* the capital, and *perhaps* suffered martyrdom there, that it seems difficult wholly to deny

\* Acts xv.

† Gal. ii. 11—14.

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it. The fabulous accounts of his long residence in that city, of his founding its church or its bishoprick, may be dismissed without a word of refutation. Peter's wife had sealed her testimony with her blood before his departure. A credible tradition informs us that, on her way to the place of execution, Peter called to her, "Oh, remember the Lord."

### THE SONS OF ZEBEDEE.

In giving a detailed account of the sons of Jonas, especially of Peter, we have in part anticipated the history of the sons of Zebedee. John and James were probably born at Bethsaida, of parents in affluent circumstances. Their names are mentioned as Zebedee and Salome. From Mark i. 20, we gather that although Zebedee was a fisherman, he employed "hired servants" to assist him—a circumstance which indicated in those times comparative affluence. Besides, Salome appears to have been able to minister to the wants of Jesus,\* and John himself must have possessed a house in Jerusalem besides his home at Bethsaida.† All these particulars, together with John's acquaintanceship with the High Priest, and his consequent immunity from the bantering accusations in the servants' hall,‡ prove that the family of Zebedee belonged to the wealthier classes. From the incidental notices of Salome, we cannot mistake if we ascribe it to her instrumentality that John ultimately became the "beloved disciple." She was one of those women in Israel whom those who rise after her call "blessed." She waited for the consolation of Israel, and from his earliest years had specially instilled into the contemplative soul of her youngest son, John, the hopes which she herself had cherished.

To Jewish mothers, the education of the children was specially committed. Beloved and respected by their husbands and children, both natural affection, the light of revelation, and even the ordinances of the Rabbins, assigned to a Jewish mother a very high position. We cannot, at present, stop to prove it, but we assert that there was not only a marked distinction between the place which woman occupied in Palestine and that which she filled in heathen countries, but that next to the dignity which the gospel assigns to her, is that which she possessed amongst the Jews.

\* Matt. xxvii. 56.

† John xix. 27.

‡ John xviii. 15, etc.



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As Salome would take young John by the hand, and lead him towards sunset by the lake of Galilee, pointing out in the distance the retreating craft on which Zebedee had gone to ply his usual avocation, all around would invite her to speak to her son of the coming glories of Israel. The eastern mountain range was already decking itself with its veil of black—the last rays of the setting sun were gilding or tinting with varied and rich hues the “steep frowning glories” of the mountains of Gilead. True, that sun had sunk, but another was soon to rise with healing under his wings. And now the stars were bedecking the azure vault above, and causing the deep lake to send back their shining beauty. More than their number, more than that of the sand on which they were treading, were to be the sons of their God. Thus would she encourage or soothe, awake or rock him to sleep, by turns, with stories of old and hopes of the future. No wonder, then, that when the Baptist appeared, John hastened to his side. Together with Andrew, he had followed Jesus, and returned to tell his wondering brother and his joyful mother the treasure he had found.

From that period the history of John and James is so closely intertwined with that of Peter, with whom they formed what we called the innermost circle around the Saviour, that very much of what we have said of Peter's intercourse with Jesus applies also to them. The prominent qualities of John's natural character were depth and earnestness. With his whole soul he clung to the Saviour. The distinguishing feature of his spiritual history was love to Jesus, a reception of his word and image into his soul, and unswerving devotedness to him. His natural disposition was, however, such as, from its intensity, when not wholly under spiritual guidance, to mislead him sometimes into an excess of carnal zeal and impatience. Thus, he could not tolerate that any should be active in the kingdom of Christ who was not a companion with them, and he would have called down fire on the village of the Samaritans who would not receive him. It was, perhaps, on account of their fiery zeal that Christ surnamed James and John, Boanerges—that is, sons of thunder. But gradually, as he imbibed more of the Master's spirit, this fiery zeal gave place to a mildness and meekness which made him more like the Master than were any of the other disciples. Hence, as he was

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pre-eminently the *loving*, so also was he the *loved*, disciple. He leant on Jesus' bosom, and could question him when none other durst interrogate. All along he seems to have understood the words of Christ better than the rest, and his gospel gives evidence how faithfully he had stored up in his mind and heart the gracious words uttered in his hearing. Naturally of a contemplative turn of mind, he now meditated on that truth which centred in Jesus. It became his light and life.

During the Saviour's life, John was his constant and most intimate companion. He accompanied him to the judgment hall; he stood by his cross and received his dying message. In obedience to it, he took the mother of Jesus to his house in Jerusalem. He was with Peter at the grave when they found the tomb empty, and was allowed to follow Christ to the last.

It will readily be conceived that Salome had felt the dearest wishes of her heart accomplished when she saw her sons adopted into such close intimacy with the Master. She herself seems to have, at least occasionally, followed and ministered to him. On one occasion, however, her womanly feelings misled her into proffering a request which can only be explained from the Jewish prejudices which she still entertained as to Messiah's kingdom. It was when she requested for her sons the privilege of sitting at Christ's right and at his left hand in his kingdom.\*

After Christ's resurrection, John seems to have remained at Jerusalem, where we find him on the occasion of Paul's second visit to that city.† At a later period, the care of the churches in Asia Minor devolved upon him, and he seems to have taken up his residence in Ephesus. His presence there was indeed urgently required. Both Jewish heretics, who denied the divinity of the Lord, and Gnostics, who substituted the devices of a philosophy, falsely so called, for the gospel, were endangering the church. The storm of persecution had also burst around the small flock. John himself did not escape unscathed. Under the reign of the emperor Domitian he was banished to the desert isle of Patmos, where he was favoured with visions recorded in the book of Revelation. But Domitian's successor, Nerva, restored John, together with many of his sufferers for conscience sake, to liberty.

This apostle attained to a very old age. *Manuscript*

\* Matt. xx. 20, 21.

† G.

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tic anecdotes are related of him. Thus it is said that, on one occasion, he had commended a very promising youth to the care of an overseer of one of the churches. In course of time the youth not only forsook his former profession, but fell into vicious habits, and even became captain of a band of robbers. The apostle went to seek him, surrendered himself to the robbers, and was brought into the presence of his former disciple, who, on seeing him, fled precipitately. But the venerable old man ran after him, nor would he leave him till he had seen him restored to the church. When too old to walk to the meetings of the brethren, he caused himself to be carried thither, and always repeated in their hearing this one admonition, "My children, love one another," believing "that if this one thing were attained, it would be enough." He left behind him some eminent disciples, who cherished the recollection of his walk and instructions.

Besides his gospel, John has left behind him three epistles, all characteristic of his spiritual development. We have seen that John, like many similarly constituted, combined with a mind naturally disposed to retirement and contemplation, when roused, a zeal fiery and sometimes excessive and erroneous. The very intensity of his feeling occasioned this zeal. On the other hand, grace reversed the process, and his zeal led him more and more to an intense feeling of love to Christ and the brethren, which finds an utterance throughout his epistles. *Love* is here represented as the Alpha and the Omega of Christian experience.

Little more requires to be said of James, apparently the elder brother of John. He formed, with Peter and John, the innermost circle. It was his to be the first amongst the apostles who suffered for the name of Christ. He was beheaded, by order of king Herod Agrippa, about the year 44, after the death of our Lord. Tradition adds, that the officer who led him to execution was so deeply impressed by the testimony which he then bore, as to avow himself on the spot a Christian, and to share the fate of James.

#### PHILIP.

Nothing could be more striking than the difference between this apostle and his townsmen, the sons of Jonas and of Zebedee. Called at the same time with them, Philip was

from the first directly ordered by the Lord to follow him. Perhaps Jesus felt that in his case such an injunction was necessary. It is certainly remarkable that while Andrew, John, and Peter followed him unbidden, Philip had to be specially called.\* He seems to have possessed a natural disposition which inclined him to judge of things from what he saw and knew. We might almost designate it as a tendency towards the material. It was difficult for him to rise to the supernatural and spiritual. His matter-of-fact mind viewed every question in that peculiar light. The spiritual training to which he was subjected seems, accordingly, to have had the correction of this tendency for its object. It is in this sense that we view the question which the Lord addressed to him, as to the mode of feeding the five thousand,† and the answer which that disciple returned. The same tendency becomes manifest in the request proffered by Philip, when the Lord spake of knowing and seeing the Father: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." He had to be told that he who had seen Christ had seen the Father, inasmuch as the Father was in Christ, and Christ in the Father. An appeal had even to be made to the works which the Father had done in and by the Son.‡ Yet how important was it to secure as one of the witnesses of Christ's resurrection, and as a messenger of his kingdom, one whose natural disposition induced him to take the most sober and common-place view of every subject! Of his after history we only know that he was present at the apostolic assembly in Jerusalem. He is said to have preached the gospel in Phrygia, and to have ultimately suffered martyrdom in Syria.

## NATHANAEL BARTHOLOMEW.

The identity of the above names has already been alluded to. Nathanael, the son of Thalmai, is mentioned by either of these designations in all the gospels. The first three Evangelists mention him always only as Bartholomew.§ The same name occurs also in the enumeration of the apostles in Acts i. 13. The apostle John, on the other hand, does not mention the name of Bartholomew at all, while he places Nathanael in the same connection with Philip as the others do Bartholomew. Besides, when Jesus held intercourse with the disciples by the

\* John i. 43.

† John vi. 5.

‡ John vi. 9—11.

§ Matt. x. 3; Mark iii. 13; Luke vi. 14.

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lake of Galilee, after his resurrection, Nathanael is named as one of the apostles present on that occasion.\* All these circumstances have led to the very general opinion, confirmed by internal grounds, that Bartholomew was the appellation which Nathanael sometimes got, just as Simon Peter is also called Bar-jonas.

Nathanael was a native of Cana, in lower Galilee, probably the same village which still bears that designation, and lies somewhat to the north-east of Sepphoris, and to the west of the lake of Galilee. Like the others, Nathanael was seriously disposed. It is likely that his mind had been occupied about events which were so soon to take place in Israel. In such meditations he had—as the practice of the Jews was—spent some time under a shady fig tree; or perhaps the regular time for morning prayer had found him under a fig tree, and, according to the custom of the Rabbins, he had remained there to perform his devotions, mingling with them aspirations after the promised Deliverer. Nathanael's mind was peculiarly constituted. He was an *honest doubter*. With an earnest desire after truth, he combined that mental constitution which suggests doubts and difficulties. Prejudice also formed an element in his character. From one or two circumstances, we would almost infer that both Nathanael and Philip had at one time been under the training of the Rabbins. Thus, when Philip tells him that in Jesus of Nazareth they had found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets spake, Nathanael replies, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" A reply this which reminds us of Rabbinical prejudices in general, and especially of those against Galilee and its villages, which had no colleges of sacred learning. Again, Philip's rejoinder, "Come and see," is one which, in almost the same words, occurs so frequently in Jewish writings, as strongly to recall them.

If Nathanael was a pupil of the Rabbins, a mind like his must have soon felt the insufficient and unsatisfactory character of their instructions. For, another characteristic of Nathanael's was, a downright honesty, which even amounted to bluntness, and an abhorrence of all hypocrisy, which led him to suspect its presence sometimes on very insufficient grounds. Thus, when, at Philip's suggestion, he came and saw the

\* John xxi. 1—4.

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Saviour, and was accosted by him as "an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile,"\* he replies, as if he had apprehended an attempt to gain him over by flattery, "Whence knowest thou me?" But when Jesus, in answer, reminded him of those secret meditations to which only God and his own heart could have been witnesses, the honest doubter becomes an equally honest believer, and he owns at once in all its fulness, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God—thou art the King of Israel."† The most delicate reproof, and to Nathanael the most precious assurance, † follow this confession. The sudden revulsion, as the spark of truth fell upon Nathanael's mind and heart, is so correct, in a psychological point of view, and agrees so fully with Christ's previous description of him, that we can readily portray the man to ourselves.

Such revulsions and thorough receptions of Christ are by no means uncommon with men of Nathanael's cast of mind. *Honest* doubt—not the low, grovelling, captious cavilling of shallow minds, and vacillating, selfish, or sensual souls—combined with an earnest search after truth, and a readiness to submit *wholly* to it when it is found, is a state of mind as interesting as it is hopeful. Except his presence in Galilee, after the resurrection, and at Jerusalem when the disciples waited for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Scripture records nothing further of Nathanael. It will readily be understood how valuable an apostle with a disposition such as that of Bartholomew must have been. Without much elevation of mind or depth of feeling, there was about him the moral earnestness and the unswerving sincerity of the man whose *convictions* had been gained by *personal experience*. Tradition reports that Nathanael afterwards carried the gospel through Armenia, and even to Arabia Felix, where he seems to have specially laboured amongst the dispersed of Judah, who, living in great numbers in those countries, were considered by their co-religionists as outcasts from the covenant of grace. A very early account informs us that he left with them a Hebrew copy of the Gospel according to Matthew, and that he suffered martyrdom in Armenia by crucifixion.

THOMAS.

In some respects a contrast, in others similar to Nathanael<sup>1</sup>

\* John i. 47.

† John i. 49.

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was Thomas, called Didymus (a twin). In the absence of historical records, tradition has preserved very varying accounts of this apostle. By some he is stated to have been a native of Antioch, by others of Galilee. Some would even make him a brother of the Lord's. Most likely he came from the neighbourhood of the lake of Galilee. The marked peculiarity of his character was *impetuosity*. He was almost wholly under the control of the feelings of the moment. Thus, when he understood that his friend Lazarus was dead, he would have gone to "die with him."\* As is frequently the case with ardent minds, there was little steadfastness about him. He had difficulty in believing anything; but when he believed it, he gave his whole soul to it. Persons of a mental constitution such as that of Thomas are very generally sceptically inclined. Nature has put a sign of interrogation into their minds, and what they possess in intensity they want in steadfastness and consistency. It is in this sense that we understand his exclamation in reply to the Lord's statement, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." "Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?"† On the same grounds he refuses to believe in the resurrection of Christ, unless, he adds (not without a kind of bravado), he could see the prints of the nails, and thrust his hand into his pierced side.‡ His request was granted, more literally than he could have expected, and then, with equal ardour, he exclaims, "My Lord and my God."§ Nor was the covert reproof and admonition to greater steadfastness—to yield less to the mere impulse and impression of the moment||—needless, or readily forgotten. According to the oldest tradition, Thomas preached the gospel—after the Lord's resurrection—in the Parthian empire, and penetrated even as far as India, where he is said to have suffered martyrdom.

### MATTHEW, OR LEVI.

Of the six principal roads which passed through Palestine, the most important was that which led from the seaport of Ptolemais, right through Galilee, to Damascus. One of these six roads went from Ptolemais and Cæsarea, along the seashore to Egypt, branching off on two different stations for

\* John xi. 16.    † John xiv. 4, 5.    ‡ John xx. 25.    § John xx. 28.  
|| John xx. 29.

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Jerusalem. Another road led from Galilee, through Samaria, to Jerusalem. A third conducted by Bethany and the wilderness to Jericho, where the Jordan was crossed, and the traveller who wished to avoid passing through Samaria, continued for some time on the eastern bank of Jordan. A fourth road led from Jerusalem to Bethlehem and Hebron. A fifth highway was that by which the traveller journeyed by Bethhoron and Lydda to Joppa. But in a commercial and agricultural point of view, the road which passed from Ptolemais, by Nazareth, Tiberias, and Capernaum, to Damascus, was the most important, not only as commanding the commerce of the East, but as furnishing the readiest means of export and import. It is true that, except the wealthier classes, who had acquired foreign habits and luxuries, the Israelites were, comparatively, independent of the import trade. With the exception of some of the metals, the only articles imported were those of luxury. The export trade, however, especially in corn, oil, wine, and balsam, was of some importance. Being chiefly produced in Galilee, and the balsam in the neighbourhood of Jericho, these articles were exported by the road which we have just indicated.

At the time of our narrative, the inhabitants of Palestine were heavily taxed. Besides the exactions of local governors, both heathen and Jewish, they were subject to a considerable number of taxes. During the reign of Herod, in addition to a kind of house tax, a duty had been levied on the produce of the soil, on all articles exported, and on everything exposed for sale in the cities. But when, after the death of Herod, Palestine became a Roman province, it also became subject to the regular taxation of the provinces. A company of Roman knights farmed these exactions, and employed tax-gatherers, or publicans, who sought to raise the revenue often by unjust, and always by vexatious extortions, against which it was next to impossible to protect one's self. Every Jew had to pay an annual tribute, the labourer a ground rent, and the agriculturist and merchant duty on all produce. Protected by the Roman power, the publicans were not only overbearing, but often sought to enrich themselves by unrighteous gains. On every highway they sat, overhauling every basket or package, and even opening the letters of those who passed. The representatives of a hated heathen



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- domination, and unjust in their dealings, the publicans were detested and eschewed by the Jews, who declared them and theirs polluted and polluting. This contempt made the latter naturally more reckless, and the mutual bitterness was very great.

On the road from Ptolemais to Damascus sat the publican Levi, at the receipt of custom, when Jesus passed by. Doubtless he had heard of him, and perhaps listened to his discourses, or witnessed his miracles. But there was different work in store for Matthew, or Levi. At the behest of the Lord, \* “he left all, rose, and followed him.” Only once more did he meet with his former companions, when he invited them to see Jesus at the feast which he had prepared for him.† Fain would he have seen them companions with himself in the kingdom of the Lord. From that day he continued steadfast in the faith, and if we may judge from his gospel, distinguished equally for a close and humble walk with Christ. And one of those precious records of Christ’s sayings and doings was written by Matthew, the publican. Tradition adds that he afterwards carried the gospel to Ethiopia, where he suffered martyrdom.

#### THE SONS OF ALPHEUS.

Amongst the apostles, we find also the names of James (called the Less, in contradistinction to John’s brother) and Jude or Lebbeus, surnamed Thaddæus. It has long been matter of dispute whether James the Less was not the same as James the Just, the brother of the Lord, whose name occurs amongst the brethren of Jesus,‡ and at a later period amongst the pillars of the church;§ and who also wrote what is known as “the Epistle of James.” But a closer investigation shows that these two persons were in reality distinct. Evangelical history presents to us three disciples, who bore the name of James—viz. James the elder, the son of Zebedee; James the Less, the son of Alpheus; and James, the brother of the Lord, who can only have been converted after the death and resurrection of Christ. || The *apostle* James was the son of Alpheus, or Cleophas (the one being the Syrian, the other the Greek mode of writing the name). His mother is expressly named as *Mary*, and was one of those women who followed the Lord, and

\* Luke v. 27. + Luke v. 29. ‡ Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3. † Gal. i. 19.

|| Compare John vii. 5—7 with Acts i. 13—14.

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stood by his cross.\* The passage in John xix. 25 has been understood by some as expressing that Mary, the wife of Cleophas, or Alpheus, was the sister of Jesus' mother. But this interpretation appears unfounded. So much only may we infer, that like the sons of Zebedee, those of Alpheus had the benefit of a pious education. James is said to have, at a later period, preached in Egypt, and to have been crucified in that country.

From the passage in Luke (vi. 16), together with the designation which Jude gives to himself in his epistle (ver. 1), as the "brother of James," we gather that he also was a son of Alpheus and Mary. He is also surnamed Lebbeus or Thaddeus, both expressions being derived from the Aramaic and Hebrew words for "breast" or "heart." Evangelical history only once mentions him as inquiring into the mode of distinction which the Lord is to make between the disciples and the world in his manifestations.† Tradition places the scene of Thaddeus' labours in Syria, Arabia, and even in Persia.

### SIMON THE CANAANITE.

Of Simon the Canaanite, or Zelotes (for both surnames, the one Hebrew, the other Greek, mean the same thing—viz., a zealot), the gospels only record the name amongst those of the other apostles. Traditions differ as to the place of his after labours, some finding it in Palestine, others in Egypt, and even in Britain. All, however, agree that he suffered martyrdom in the cause of his Master.

### JUDAS ISCARIOT.

Before explaining, though of necessity very briefly, our views of the character and motives of this wretched man, we shall in a few sentences trace his history. A native of the city of Karioth, in the ancient possession of the tribe of Judah, and the son of Simon, he was called by the Lord to the apostolate. Along with the others, he witnessed his glorious deeds, and was even despatched with them on the apostolic mission to which we have formerly referred. Entrusted specially with keeping the bag from which the necessities of the apostolic circle, as also those of the poor, were supplied, he

\* Mark xv. 40; Matt. xxvii. 56; John xix. 25.

† John xiv. 22.

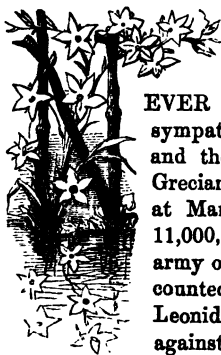
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seems early to have given place to covetousness, and to have maladministered the funds committed to his care. He could not understand or sympathise with the views of those who prepared for the approaching death of the Lord, and at last consented to betray the Master, bargaining for a reward of 30 shekels (about £4 10s., the legal price of a slave, and equal to about four months' wages of a day-labourer). Perceiving the consequences of his conduct, and seized with violent remorse, he offered to restore the money, with which afterwards the Aceldama—the field of blood—the burying-place of strangers—was purchased. The Sanhedrim would not accept either the money or his explanations, and the unhappy man, forsaken by all, and condemned by his own conscience, destroyed himself in a fit of despair. We will not venture any opinion as to the grounds on which Christ originally received him into the band of the apostles. Throughout Scripture we are always presented with exemplifications of the development of sin alongside with that of grace. Originally, no doubt, there had been an amount of earnestness and a degree of inquiry about Judas. But his carnal soul was disappointed, and more and more alienated by the spiritual manifestations of Christ. The Lord knew it, and not only in general warned him of the leaven of the Pharisees, but specially of his own danger. The increasing light of spirituality and truth only excited more and more his dissatisfaction, which gradually grew into hatred. His covetousness also became stronger. It was under these circumstances that the wily Pharisees tampered with him. Still he appears at the last supper, and only when he finds himself known he rises abruptly to do quickly what he had meant to do. His hatred is now complete. With a kiss he can betray the Son of Man, and act as guide to those who came to take him. The deed is done. But suddenly, though his views remain unchanged, the whole truth concerning its character flashes upon his mind. Hated and despised by Jew and Gentile, the betrayer sees no way of escape, and hurries headlong to destruction—a sad and awful warning that the gospel is a savour of death unto death, where it is not one of life unto life—that it calls forth the fell enmity where it secures not the full submission of the heart.

THE  
MACCABEAN CHIEFTAINS;  
OR, THE  
THIRTY YEARS' WAR OF JEWISH INDEPENDENCE.

"Their altars they forego, their homes they quit,  
Fields which they love, and paths they daily trod,  
And cast the future upon Providence;  
As men, the dictates of whose inward sense  
Outweighs the world; whom self-deceiving wit  
Lures not from what they deem the cause of God."

WORDSWORTH.



EVER can we altogether refrain from feeling sympathy with the exploits of the patriotic and the brave. When we read the story of Grecian resistance to Persian invasions—how at Marathon the rushing onslaught of the 11,000, under Miltiades, vanquished the whole army of Persia, till the slain could not be counted—how the 300 Spartans, under Leonidas, defended the pass of Thermopylæ against tens of thousands—and how, a few weeks later in the naval fight near Salamis, the small Grecian fleet, under Themistocles and Eurybiades, strewed the sea with the wreck of Xerxes's mightiest armament, and left few ships to escape to bear intelligence of the catastrophe to Smyrna:—when we read, in later times, how the dense array and halberds of the Swiss Burghers resisted the onset of the mailed cavalry of Burgundy under Charles the Bold, and finally overwhelmed his army with slaughter, and taught a lesson of valour which Europe b

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respected for ever:—when, turning to our own history, we read of the successive struggles by which freedom at home was finally achieved and secured; or of the mighty and critical battles by which our safety was defended against attack from abroad:—when we read of these noble deeds in the history of nations, ancient and modern—deeds by which they obtained or preserved their freedom—we refuse not our admiration and sympathy to any of these struggles, however remote in time or country. Their being foreign, or distant, weakens not the interest of their story. We seem to share the solicitude of the Greeks themselves in that moment of their history when the tidings reached them of the huge armament of Persia having crossed the Hellespont; or when it was told in the streets of Athens, or of Sparta, that the 300 were arrived and calmly posted in the pass of Thessaly; or when the families of Athens were on their way to the Piræus to take refuge in their shipping; or when watching there the fight of Salamis, they saw the first ships of Persia go down in the waters, or heard the first cheer of their countrymen's triumph. With these, and with other foreign and ancient struggles, our sympathy is almost as vivid as with those which are identified with our own freedom. Nor is our admiration given unworthily. Of these and other successful achievements of heroism, some of them changed the face of history, others preserved it from change, and all have conferred inestimable benefits on mankind. The resistance of Greece saved European civilization, at the bright moment of its development, from the inundation of Asiatic despotism and debasement. The Swiss victories broke the force of embattled chivalry, restored the balance and prestige of battle to the courage of a determined infantry, and set up the still streaming banner of freedom on the western heights of Europe. The struggles which ended in the expulsion of the Stuarts, and the establishment of constitutional freedom among ourselves, interest us by nearer claims and benefits. If we reject not our share of the incalculable blessings which heroic men, in such critical conjunctures of history as those alluded to, have transmitted to posterity, we cannot, as often as we revert to those times, refuse them the meed of our admiration and gratitude, or fail to deem them, in some sort, under Providence, which must have favoured a success so

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beneficent, as the ministering spirits of freedom and of intellectual and moral advancement.

Such is the natural identity of interest and sentiment with which we regard these celebrated achievements. But it is not to be denied that with respect to one people, and one series of historic achievement, our sympathy, though not distinctly refused, is not equally warm and vivid, or perhaps it may be more correct to say, fails to be awakened at all. One people there is whose story, as far as it has been recorded, is more familiar than any other, even that of our own country not excepted, with whom there is not felt the same thrilling identity of passionate sentiment in their various struggles and sorrows, deliverances and achievements. Nor yet can it be said with truth that the existence and the development of this people held no relation to the history of the rest of the world. On the contrary, their influence has confessedly been the mightiest and most valuable. That people, whose deliverance from Egypt and final establishment in Palestine had been effected by the aid of constant miracle, were afterwards submitted to the same perils as other nations, and through every subsequent period had to defend their possessions by their own fortitude and valour. For many ages, it is true, their own exertions were often succoured by special interposition; but in the later periods of their history, such visible aid from heaven was not present. They encountered national perils under the ordinary conditions of personal exertion, joined to humble trust in Providence.

Nor was their preservation unimportant to the interests of mankind. More than any other single nation, the Hebrew people centred in themselves the destiny of the world, so that at any point their existence or destruction involved consequences of incalculable moment to the rest of the human race: and as a people their existence was in frequent hazard. Apart from the unchanging purposes of heaven, and viewed only in their own capacity as a nation, there were times when their extermination seemed imminent; and other times when, if not their extermination, that fate seemed imminent which was still more to be dreaded—their alienation from the religion of the true God, and the extinction of the divine knowledge entrusted to them. And the occasions when such perils encompassed them are before us in their history.

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achievements, moreover, are recorded, by which heroic men among them encountered those perils, and averted ruin from their race and oblivion from their institutions.

But our sympathy with these critical periods of suspense or of heroism is not the same as with those of Grecian history; while yet it cannot be denied that the influence of the Jewish race is infinitely more deep and pervading than that of the most heroic and intellectual of ancient nations. The language, the speculations, the arts of Greece survive, and will ever continue to act on the culture of the civilized world. But had only Grecian influence remained to determine the thinking and character of later times, the intellect of Europe had this day been enslaved even more than that of central Asia, by the most base and foul mythology; nor would the masses of its population have risen from the prostrate subjection to tyranny, and that sensual debasement of character into which Greece herself sunk in the age next after the conquests of Alexander. The moral destiny, and with it the intellectual and social resurrection of Europe, lay hidden in Palestine. The extirpation of the Jewish race, or the extinction of their religious knowledge, would have been the perishing, too, of the reserved hopes of the world: yet, for the heroism which, under Providence, prevented this catastrophe, there is felt but a faint and unwilling sympathy.

Why is this? It is not that such heroism is disbelieved, or that its value and consequences are, when reflected on, not admitted; for we speak not of the sentiments of infidels on this subject, but refer to the general feeling of Christian readers. And the question is an interesting and pertinent one—why the interest, given lavishly to other heroic national struggles, is given reluctantly, or not at all, to the heroism of Jewish warfare? The causes are twofold: our sympathy is checked, first, by the sacredness of the general ground of their history; and secondly, by the obscurity which rests on that part of it which is not included in the sacred record, but which, as we shall hope to show, is, on human grounds, not less interesting and important than portions which are more familiar to us. When we follow the story of their deliverance in the Red Sea, or through the Wilderness, or their conquests in Canaan, or the perils and victories of subsequent ages to the time of the Captivity, we discern

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most frequently rather the interpositions of Divine power than the heroic acts of the nation, and reverence of the Divine agency precludes even remembrance of the human. In the exploits, however, of Jephthah, of Samson, of Saul, of Jonathan, and of David, there are displayed not simply the attendant heavenly auspices which ensured success, but a lofty self-devotion and heroism which would bear comparison with that of the champions of right and truth in any age or country. Yet our prevailing feeling is reverence for the concealed miraculous power which gave their efforts a success so disproportioned to their force, rather than admiration of their valour, often committed in single-handed conflict against numbers. The same remark will apply to subsequent instances in sacred history. With respect to the circumstances of Jewish history after that date, a different cause of the general indifference alluded to must be assigned. That part of their history is less familiar to us, and is related with less of simple and graphic minuteness. Furthermore, there is an inveterate sentiment of contempt indulged by even Christian nations towards Jews, which is part of their inheritance of depression and ignominy, and which obstructs the fair and candid appreciation of their history, both in the interval preceding the appearance of the Messiah, and in the terrible scenes of their final overthrow and dispersion. But for these circumstances, the occurrences and heroism of these times could not have failed to awaken a deep and enduring interest.

With this feeling we have to contend in treating of that part of their history which includes the wars of the Maccabees. These wars are recorded in those Apocryphal writings which were formerly bound up with the sacred Scriptures, but which for many years past have ceased to be so, in consequence of the just exception taken against such conjunction by Protestants in this country. Even when they were thus bound up in the same volume, they were, in this country, rarely consulted. They were regarded with contempt and suspicion, both on account of their repudiated pretensions as inspiration, and on account of the fabulous and even monstrous character of several of the books as history. Now that they have ceased to come before us in the same volume with the sacred oracles, except in the older editions, they rarely meet the Protestant reader's



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eye, and are consigned as a whole to entire oblivion. Yet these Apocryphal writings, however justly despised in their higher claims, contain portions which are highly valuable as history; while certain other books are rich in moral and devout sentiment. The books of the Maccabees in particular are entitled to our esteem, as a faithful narrative of the times to which they relate, and one whose authenticity in the main is corroborated by all the contemporary evidence in other history or tradition that has descended to us from that age. In these books, and somewhat more amply in Josephus, are contained the incidents of that memorable resistance which saved the Jewish institutions from extinction. The general contempt which has justly fallen on these writings in their higher pretensions, was extended to that national struggle which they relate; but we trust, nevertheless, that the attempt may not be altogether hopeless, to interest some readers in its details.

### PRELIMINARY SUMMARY.

It is scarcely necessary to mention, that the causes which originated the thirty years' war of the Maccabees, were the cruelties perpetrated on the Jewish people by Antiochus Epiphanes, with a view to the extirpation of their faith. It would lead us into a wider digression than our limits will allow, to deduce the history of the restored tribes from the restoration under Zerubbabel, to the time when Judea became a dependency of the monarchy of Syria. Such a review would necessarily require contemporaneous notices of revolutions in the kingdom of Persia, and of its successive monarchs; of the conquests of Alexander, and of the monarchies formed by the partition of his empire; for all these had an immediate bearing on the condition of the Jews. The Jewish war of independence is a chapter by itself. As the restoration from Babylon placed Israel once more in possession of her city, temple, and institutions, so the war we are to treat of guarded these from destruction.

Our narrative will commence from the persecutions of Antiochus, and close at the accession of John Hyrcanus, the first of the Asmonean princes, to the throne of Judea. The interval comprised in this review will be from about the year 170 to 140 B.C. In the beginning of these thirty years, we have the persecution and threatened extinction of the

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Jewish faith. The year 168 B.C. marks the date of the first resistance by Mattathias, and the year 166 B.C., that of this heroic patriot's death. Judas Maccabeus, his third son, and the most celebrated of this family, conducts the warfare with signal success for the next five years. He falls in battle in the year 160 B.C.; and the command is assumed by his youngest brother Jonathan, who, after a troubled rule of fifteen years, perishes by treachery about the year 145 B.C. Next after him succeeds Simon, another brother, older than Judas, being the second son of Mattathias. His life also is cut short by assassination, after a reign of about ten years, 135 B.C. But the independence of Judea had by this time been achieved, and the power of the last of the Maccabean chieftains established so firmly, that the government was unanimously devolved on his youngest son, John Hyrcanus, and continued in the hands of his descendants through several long and prosperous reigns, till the usurpation of Herod the Great, who married Mariamne, the last branch of the Asmonean family.

## THE ASMONEAN FAMILY AT MODIN.

Little is known of this family anterior to the events which elicited its heroic character. The very town where Mattathias dwelt, and where the first spark of insurrection was kindled, is known but by its name. Modin is mentioned by Josephus as a small town, situate on an eminence within view of the Mediterranean. In some maps it is placed as lying midway between Jerusalem and the town of Acra, on the coast. It was probably a small hamlet, which fell into decay amid the prosperity of neighbouring towns, and of which all trace in succeeding generations disappeared. Mattathias, the father of the Maccabean chiefs, belonged to the priestly line of Joarib, but was no otherwise distinguished than as a man of unbending probity, and one of those whom neither the bribes nor the menaces of the officers of Antiochus had been able to influence. That he was marked for future vengeance, if he still persisted in his refusal to turn idolater, he must have been fully aware; nor could it have escaped him and his family, that a tragedy like that which had lately befallen the widow's sons at Jerusalem,\* probably awaited themselves—either *that*, or

\* See the Tract entitled, "The Jewish Sects," p. 1, 25—27.

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submission to apostacy, or possibly the task of delivering themselves and their country by open revolt!

Of the mother in this family no mention is made. She had probably before this time been removed to her rest. The father was advanced in years, but hale and vigorous in heart and nerve. His sons were all young men in the prime of manhood, five in number—John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan; and they all shared their father's high resolve, of adherence, in every event, to the cause of truth, and the religion of their forefathers. They knew the trial was not distant, and were prepared, most probably—not for the career of resistance which ultimately opened before them—but for emulating the heroic endurance and death of other young men of whose martyrdom they had lately heard, or had been one or more of them, perhaps, the sorrowing witnesses, at Jerusalem.

It is not certain that they had yet mingled in the ranks of warfare. It is just possible that, in the first efforts to resist the subjugation of their country, or in some subsequent fruitless insurrections, they had borne part. But on the whole, judging from their years and the silence of tradition, the probabilities are against this, and that the young men who were now of an age to share their father's anxious counsels were strangers to war, and had risen up around him in the quiet of home, in the strict culture of domestic piety, and devoted to the toils of industry in the field and the vineyard. Except in the free and lofty spirit which distinguished them all, and in the enthusiasm they inherited from their parents for the institutions of their forefathers, there was little to mark them for the career of heroes and deliverers of their country. Their habits were domestic, their spirit dutiful, their bearing modest and calm. That they shared their father's reputation for probity and worth may be confidently inferred from the willingness with which their countrymen, in the subsequent struggle, devolved the command on several of the sons in succession after the father's decease. Such was the family on whom the future condition of the descendants of Israel, and, it may be added, the interests of human welfare to remotest ages, were, in the secret intentions of Providence, now dependent.

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### DELIBERATIONS ON THE COMING CRISIS.

In the conferences which preceded the arrival of the Syrian officer, in that dwelling at Modin—conferences, doubtless, often held between the patriarch and his sons—deliberations renewed after the evening prayer, and protracted at times beyond the midnight hour, or perhaps adjourned for secrecy to the roof of their dwelling, where they sat pensive under the moon's bright ray, and in view of the sea which reflected her gleam—in these conferences of the father and sons, probably no plan was conceived of by which tyranny could be overthrown, but the fortitude only inculcated and prayed for by which the cause of God might not be dishonoured. They were aware that there were not a few families in the towns and villages near them, and many still left in and near Jerusalem, who felt, as they did, not less but more of determination to face the crisis forced on by the measures of Antiochus, whatever form it should assume. But with such families, there is no evidence that they had concerted any plan of national deliverance. Still, they were not ignorant that the remainder of the task before Antiochus—that of effecting the like prostration of feeling in towns remote from Jerusalem, as at the centre of government—would offer new difficulties, and perchance might lead to a different result. But for themselves, we may well believe, judging from the circumstances of the time and the silence of history, the future unfolded itself only in peril, and probably martyrdom.

If, indeed, we adopt the other alternative; if we are to conclude that Mattathias and his sons had revolved the problem of resistance and its chances, and that the vengeance which lighted from the arm of Mattathias on the apostate Jew and his instigator was not unpremeditated; then their previous conferences must have assumed a more exciting character, and embraced the balancing of more various considerations, hopes, and possibilities. In this case, the father had to determine the greatest of all human questions, not only for himself and his family, but for thousands more whom his act might draw to join him, and for his nation and country whom his decision might involve. Nor would it have been without frequent and profound reconsideration, and revolving of results, and incessant prayer for right guidance from above. as well as the frequent sinking of human feeling, that

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patriarch would have come to the decision which no good man reaches except as the sole alternative of hope and duty. We must leave the question in the uncertainty in which we find it; while each reader, for himself, must be left to infer the intention of resistance or of martyrdom, according as the antecedent circumstances of the period, compared with the events which we are soon to relate, may incline his judgment.

### THE FIRST ACT OF RESISTANCE.

On a day, of which Mattathias had, doubtless, received due notice, Apelles, the officer of Antiochus, arrived at Modin, and forthwith proceeded to make offers to the patriarch of most splendid advantages, if he would conform to the usages of heathenism. The apostacy of so revered and well-known a name would have been a triumph worth any bribe. Less costly than a campaign, its success would have been wider and more permanent. If Mattathias yielded, the event would have sent misgiving and despair to the hearts of thousands, and would have given a pretext for the submission of those who might still be wavering betwixt fear for their lives and fidelity to the truth. Nor had conspicuous examples been wanting of such desertion. Had not some of the very priesthood forsaken the ark of God? Were not some of them in open alliance with the persecutor? Would the apostacy, or call it the temporizing, of Mattathias be so singular? If he refused compliance, was there a hope of successful revolt? If a general resistance seemed hopeless, and he should yet be faithful, was it easy to surrender his own person to the scourge and the flame, and to associate his sons in the same terrible fate?

All these questions received their solution in the old man's prompt reply, and in the event which followed. In the open space, probably near the synagogue, where an altar for Jupiter had been made ready, and where thousands were assembled to hear his decision, as Apelles kept urging his proposals, Mattathias answered that it was his resolution to live and die in the faith of his fathers! Both entreaty and menace proved unavailing, as far as he and his family were concerned; and the crisis would have passed away, at least for a time, but for an occurrence which, perhaps, Mattathias had little calculated upon; or if he had thought of it as possible, had little considered how it should be met.

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Efforts which he had disdainfully resisted were but too successful with one of his countrymen. In his presence, an apostate Jew advances to the altar to offer sacrifice to a heathen idol. The feelings of the instant determine the cast of the future. A stroke from the weapon of Mattathias laid the apostate dead before the altar, and another has struck to the ground Apelles, the Syrian Commissioner! The citizens around are roused to enthusiasm. The first blow has been struck, which thousands will now vindicate. The apathy of despair gives place to the energy of hope and determination. A single incident had changed the whole purpose of the day. Thus it has ever been in revolutions. Men hesitate long in dread of the all-momentous commencement, when some trivial occurrence brings on the irretrievable deed, and the spark spreads to a conflagration.

### RETREAT TO THE MOUNTAINS.

"The power of armies is a visible thing;  
But who the limits of that power shall trace  
Which a brave people into light can bring,  
Or hide at will—for freedom combatting,  
By just revenge inflamed! No foot may chase,  
No eye can follow, to a fatal place,  
That power, that spirit, whether on the wing  
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind  
Within its awful caves."

WORDSWORTH.

It was now necessary for Mattathias, not only to consult for his own and his sons' safety, but to take measures for making the resistance general. He at once withdrew with his sons to the neighbouring mountains, and summoned thither all the loyal of his countrymen. Thousands eagerly joined him. The gravity and prudence of the leader were ample security for the hopefulness of the attempt; and his determined character gave promise that nothing which zeal, courage, and good conduct could bring to the success of the insurgent war, would be wanting. Rejoiced were many brave hearts that now a leader had offered, in whom all could confide. Gladly did those who had languished in despair and inaction the last two years, and had been doomed to witness the outrages of tyranny, comply with the signal to unite with their brave countrymen in another blow for freedom. There was swift traversing from place to place; there was the ringing on of

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wards, without one imploring appeal to the pity which they knew the enemy would not give, all these brave men met their fate without a movement towards self-defence or flight. They were sabred, or their brains dashed out, with ruthless despatch; and thus they fell sacrifices to their reverence for the Sabbath, deeming such death, in keeping holy the day of rest, not less their privilege than their inviolable duty.

### THE LAW OF THE SABBATH RELAXED.

This was an extreme interpretation of the law of the Sabbath, which was surely never intended by the Divine command, at least on the supposition that defensive war is in any case just. In the present instance, it placed a whole people at the mercy of the enemy; and if, in former wars, there had been no peril of national extinction by such submission, it was not so now in the invasions of Antiochus; for his design had now become avowed, to extirpate the people, and the religious oracles which were identified with their history, and which had cemented their union. If, at this time, even a war of self-defence was to be undertaken at all, it must not be waged on such conditions that it must frustrate itself, and that those who repelled the enemy successfully on preceding days of the week should submit to be butchered unresistingly on the seventh day. The extremity of the emergency—the mournful fate of the brave thousand—the loss of so valuable a force—and the certainty, now become apparent, that if a single ritual of religion, unduly extended, suspended their defence on the Sabbath, the whole of religion itself, its institutions, its oracles, its very name and memory, with the ruin of their nation, would become the ultimate sacrifice—determined Mattathias, and the chiefs around him, to reconsider this grave question; and they came to the decision that henceforward the Sabbath day should still strictly preclude all *attack* upon the enemy, but that, when themselves attacked, it should be right to take arms and defend the position they held.

The need of such deliberation may seem to the reader very absurd. It may seem obvious enough that in regard to works of necessity (and surely the defence of life was such), the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. But the feelings which enforced such strictness, though pushed to

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a mistaken extreme, are not therefore less worthy of respect. If a people's piety carried them thus far, so as to expose their lives to peril in obedience to a written precept, it was at least a grand national proof of their intense and absolute conviction of the Divine origin of their law. We have dwelt the more distinctly upon it on account of its significant bearing on Scripture evidence, and also because it was at this time, during the wars of the Maccabees, that the national rule of non-resistance on the Sabbath was discontinued, and the design of the Sabbatical precept more intelligently construed.

From this time, Mattathias felt free from apprehension that his forces would be consumed by unresisted assaults, without effecting anything for their country. While careful to fix himself in positions which required little effort to defend, and after giving practical evidence to the enemy of the determination to repel assault, he still sought most earnestly to guard the Sabbath from encroachment. The war was one in defence of the true religion of God. The Sabbaths were days, not of mere rest from toil and hardship, but of holy worship and prayer. The observance of them now was the public re-assertion of their rights and hopes and higher allegiance. Never in the temple were offered songs of more fervent praise than were now uttered on the mountain tops and in the caves of Judea. If, on the morrow, there were perils to be encountered, or even death, their determination was confirmed in these observances of humility and hope—observances which had long ceased in the temple, and had ceased, except at intervals, throughout the land.

Most prudently did the Jewish commander conduct the warfare at other times. Without perilling his smaller forces in any general engagement, he made sudden attacks on various posts of the enemy. His troops poured down unexpectedly on towns held by the Syrian forces. The heathen altars were destroyed, and apostates punished. Many copies of the Scriptures were recovered; synagogues were re-opened for worship, and the law of God was again read and explained. The forces of the enemy were weakened by these successive attacks, which were carried on for the space of about a year under Mattathias. But the vigour of the old man at length broke down under these harassing exertions. He died, not in battle, but on his couch, and most probably in his own dwelling at



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Modin, full of years and honour; and such was the terror of his name, that the enemy offered not to disturb his burial in his native city. So ended the days of the venerable patriot, without whose sanction the revolt had wanted authority in the eyes of his countrymen, and whose prudence tempered the daring of their early efforts, and trained them to the skilful prosecution of the war. But his death inferred no loss to the war, after this its preliminary stage. His sons inherited his piety, his sagacity, and his courage; and the thousands mustered under his standard, with one voice, devolved the chief command on the bravest of these, his third son, who afterwards surpassed the example of his father, and became celebrated under the name of Judas Maccabeus.

### JUDAS MACCABEUS.

His brothers, no less than the other chiefs, joyfully acquiesced in the authority of the younger hero, and eagerly seconded his aims and counsels. In his hands the war became more aggressive. His forces had been augmented by success. From the remotest hamlets his countrymen thronged to his standard; and he was soon in a condition to deal a severe blow on the enemy. Under the new commander was unfurled the celebrated banner of the Maccabees, a designation the origin of which is uncertain. Some derive it from the concluding letters of a sentence in the eleventh verse of the fifteenth chapter of Exodus: "Mi Camo Ka Baalim, Jehovah? Who is like unto thee among the gods, O Jehovah?" Some affirm that it was the banner of the tribe of Dan, which contained the three last letters of the names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: while others contend that it was assumed as a personal designation by Judas, from a word signifying a hammer, like the cognomen of Charles Martel, the hero of the Franks. Whencesoever derived, however, or whatever their special import, these letters, embroidered on the banner, bore a charmed meaning to the patriot band, and gave a new title to their young commander and to the insurgent war. The banner of the Maccabees announced the bond of their union, and the omen of their future success.

Having trained his forces to warfare by a series of successful attacks on various places, it was now time to prepare for the encounter in open battle, with the armies which Antiochus

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pushed forward in all haste for the defence of his possessions in Palestine, as well as to wreak ample vengeance on a people who had dared to dispute his sway. The war, from this point, therefore, becomes one of open conflict with the armies of Antiochus, and not a mere defence of positions.

The first of the Syrian generals who marched against Judas was Apollonius, who had been appointed governor of Samaria. With a force augmented most probably by the Samaritans—whose ancient hatred of the Jews had lost none of its bitterness, and who had acquiesced unresistingly in the Grecian idolatry enforced by Antiochus—Apollonius, being nearest to the disturbed province, marched against the insurgents with an overwhelming force. He was intrepidly met by the patriots under Judas Maccabeus, his forces were routed, and Apollonius was amongst the slain. This first victory over the enemy, in open battle, gave token to Antiochus that it might not be so easy as he supposed to retain his hold on Palestine, and it gave enthusiasm in an equal degree to the forces under Judas, as well as tended to draw new adherents to his undertaking. Judas ever afterwards used the sword of the first general he had thus defeated.

## THE PASS OF BETH-HORON.

The next commander who advanced against Judas was Seron, the deputy governor of Cœle-Syria, a province to the north of Galilee. He hastened eagerly to avenge the defeat of Apollonius. Judas determined to arrest his advance into Judea, and for this purpose posted his forces in the Pass of Beth-horon. This pass lies north-west of Jerusalem, and is not distant from Bethel. It is a pass memorable in Jewish history in all its more critical epochs—in the conquest of Canaan under Joshua, in the recovery of Palestine under Judas, and afterwards in the early period of Judea's last conflict with Rome. It was after the defeat of the Amorites at Gibeon, that they were wholly destroyed in the Pass of Beth-horon, when Joshua bid the sun stand still over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Ajalon. It was in their descent through this pass that the Roman legions under Cestius were utterly routed, and a faint gleam of hope came on the minds of the most prudent of the Jews before the arrival of Titus and Vespasian.

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Here it was that Judas determined to engage the army of Seron. The result was the utter rout and slaughter of the enemy. Thus a second great victory was gained; two considerable armies had been destroyed; and although Jerusalem and other fortified towns were still held by the enemy, the command of much of the country to the south and west was now in the hands of Judas. But he had yet to prepare against a more formidable force, which, in different detachments, and under different commanders, was now on its way from Syria. Of these, the vanguard, amounting to 20,000, under the command of Nicanor and Gorgias, arrived soon by hasty marches in the province. They were followed by a larger body, under the general-in-chief, Ptolemy Macron, making in all 40,000 foot, and 7000 horse. Such a force seemed more than adequate for putting down insurrection in a small province, or rather a part of that province. It would have been still larger, but that at this time the two chief kingdoms under the rule of Antiochus, Armenia and Persia, had refused the usual tribute, and he was under the necessity of marching in person to crush rebellion in the East. But Ptolemy doubted not his ability to accomplish his master's wish in the destruction of the insurgents of Judea. Such was the confidence in his success, that, as was not unusual in ancient warfare, a number of slave merchants followed in the train of his army, prepared to purchase those Jewish prisoners whom the event of battle might place at the disposal of Ptolemy. That event lay yet in the balance, and was to be decided amid odds fearfully overwhelming to the band under Judas.

## THE DAY OF FASTING AT MIZPEH.

The forces under Judas were assembled at Mizpeh, and their whole number was only 6000 men. This was a place hallowed by many associations to the descendants of Israel. Here the nation had in former perils come together; and not far hence, perhaps, might still be seen the stone set up by the prophet, and called Ebenezer. It cannot be too often impressed on the reader that this war of the Maccabees was chiefly a war to regain *the freedom of worshipping God*. It was resentment at being deprived of their temple, and of the free use of their sacred oracles; it was the dread of seeing the light of religion among them finally extinguished,

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which roused the venerable Mattathias to strike a blow for his country's freedom, without which, under the tyranny of Antiochus, there was no hope of recovering *religious* liberty. He and his compatriots had endured much, in the spoliation of their property, and innumerable other oppressions. But these they had submitted to patiently for many years. The persecutions carried on against their *religious* institutions, the desecration of the temple, the abolishing of synagogues, and the martyrdom of those who resisted idolatry—these were the intolerable calamities which rendered insurrection a duty. And the spirit of religion gave its character to the whole war. The warriors now assembled at Mizpeh were devout Israelites. They were sincere believers in the divine oracles. They practised the strictest rules of piety and virtue. They were the servants of the living God. If we refuse to view them in this light, we do them great injustice. The Maccabees were intelligent and devout men, who saw no hope for their country, none for their race, none for the ark of truth, but in the expulsion of the oppressor from their soil. Why should these Jewish patriots alone be placed beyond the sympathies of their fellow-men? We deem not worse of the warriors who resisted Charles I, because they had prayer in the camp; why, then, withhold our interest and esteem from the praying host at Mizpeh?

There, where the most beautiful character in all their history, the prophet Samuel, reared from childhood in the service of Jehovah, had in his maturity dispensed law and offered sacrifices; on this ground, not unconsecrated, now their temple was in other possession, the Maccabean warriors assembled; and in prospect of what might be their last and fatal conflict, devoted themselves to fasting and supplication before the Lord. Nor let it surprise the reader to learn further, that at Mizpeh, after the season of fasting and prayer was ended, such was the faith of Judas and his brothers in the aid of heaven and in the righteousness of their cause, and such their fidelity to the ancient direction of their law, on the evening before their greatest battle, Judas gave orders that all who had "married wives, or built houses, or planted vineyards, or were any way faint-hearted," should return to their homes! This proclamation reduced his force to 3000, and with this band he meant to advance against the enemy who were encamped at Emmaus. In these measures,

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were the Maccabeans mistaken enthusiasts? or did they not act in the spirit of the precepts which they avowed as their rule? We dwell on this point of their character, because we wish to disperse the mist of obscurity or contemptuous prejudice which hangs over the Maccabean struggle, and to show them forth as noble-minded and devout men. Nothing but their sincere piety, and conscious reliance on the favour of heaven, could have induced their chiefs at Mizpeh to hazard so terrible a diminution of their force in obedience to their Scriptures, at the very moment that an army of some 50,000 men was encamped at no great distance, prepared on the morrow to overwhelm the patriot band of Judas. In the evening, after the departure of those entitled to revisit their homes, 3000 alone, as we have stated, mustered under the Maccabean standard. But to their own view, their dwindled force was only evidence of their truer fidelity to God, and their courage and hope rose higher as their numbers diminished.

### THE NIGHT MARCH ON THE SYRIAN CAMP AT EMMAUS.

It was now time to act, and the more so that Judas had received intelligence that Gorgias, with a force of 5000 foot and 1000 horse, had been detached for the purpose of surprising the Jewish camp at night. Judas resolved on the daring step of marching by a different route, in the direction of the enemy's encampment. It was morning before they arrived at Emmaus, but he instantly poured down his determined band on the unforewarned host of the Syrians; and such was the resistless fierceness and surprise of the attack, that the army of Ptolemy was utterly routed and dispersed, and the camp abandoned to the Maccabean troops. Judas, however, restrains them from the plunder of the camp till the return of Gorgias and his soldiers. They at last are seen advancing over the mountains in quest of the Jewish insurgents. Their first surprise is to behold part of their camp in flames, their next to see approach them the standards of the Maccabees. They are broken on the first shock, and flee in all directions. Thus the mighty forces which had been arrayed by Ptolemy were dissipated. Many were slain, many taken prisoners, and in the latter number were some of the slave-merchants, who were forthwith sold to slavery. The rich booty of the

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camp, consisting of treasure, arms, and stores, was distributed by Judas amongst his followers.

This decisive defeat of the enemy was on a Friday. The next day was spent with far other feelings than had been for many years past familiar to their Sabbath. They had succeeded in putting to flight an overwhelming force, and might hope at length that heaven had not abandoned their cause, nor disregarded their prayer. Very soon after, Judas and his troops, now doubtless again augmented, crossed the Jordan, and defeated a great force under the command of Timotheus and Bacchides. The open country west of the Jordan was now free, with the exception of Jerusalem, where a strong garrison was stationed.

Through the winter of this year, 165 B.C., the whole of the province of Judea had rest from war. But early in the next year, Lysias, who held the chief command in the absence of Antiochus, arrived in Palestine, with a larger force than any which had hitherto been assembled against Judas. But instead of re-entering Judea on the north, he marched round into the territory of the Idumeans, and with a large augmentation of his army from amongst these ancient enemies of Israel, appeared on the southern frontier of Judea, with a host numbering in all 60,000 foot and 5000 horse. This immense force (its numbers perhaps exaggerated) may have been less formidable in reality, on account of the miscellaneous character of its auxiliary portions, than the disciplined army commanded by Ptolemy. It was at least the greatest effort hitherto made by Syria, and might prove the last. Judas, with an army of 10,000, shrunk not from the encounter, and he was again victorious. He utterly broke and routed the ranks of Lysias, and with comparatively small loss on his own side, 5000 of the enemy lay slain on the field.

## THE MARCH TO JERUSALEM, AND RE-DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

The heroic defender of his country, the conqueror in so many battles, could now, after the defeat of Lysias, indulge the reflection, which would have seemed a few years before the wildest dream, that no enemy oppressed the land, and that the time was arrived when he might march his forces to the holy city, and restore the temple to the service of God. Such

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was the great national event which followed the victory last achieved. The citadel in Jerusalem was still held by a garrison, and could not at present be successfully assailed. But there was no force to dispute their entrance into the city, or their access to the temple. On the arrival of Judas and his troops, accompanied by thousands of the population, who had joined them on the march, they found the city of their fathers almost a wilderness. In the lonely streets, grass and shrubs had grown up, it is stated, like the underwood of a forest, and in the temple tokens of heathen usages everywhere met the eye. Wild lamentations mingled with the sound of martial trumpets on their entrance. The idol statue was speedily hurled from its place, and every part of the temple cleansed and purified. A new altar was raised, and vessels of gold prepared for the sanctuary. Those of the priesthood who had maintained their fidelity were installed in their sacred office; and finally a feast of dedication was celebrated, with sacrifice, and prayer, and thanksgiving, during the space of eight days—a festival ever after held sacred in the Jewish calendar. Who can conceive the deep and various emotions of that day, when a whole people were again permitted to raise their voices in the temple of God, and patriots could exult in the freedom of their country! How would the remembrance of the cruel scenes so lately enacted in the streets of the city, and of the profanations of the temple, excite the now liberated multitude to renewed vows and thanksgiving! Nor could the noble sons of Mattathias, as they stood bare-headed amongst the warriors, have failed to wish that their venerable father had been spared to share the fulfilment of his prayers.

No immediate cause of anxiety arose to disturb the joy of the patriotic chief. Neighbouring tribes on the east and the south, the Ammonites and the Idumeans, evinced a disposition to confederate against Judea; but Judas, having secured Jerusalem against attack from the garrison, by fortifying the temple on the side next the citadel, marched his army into their territories, and compelled their submission. A considerable force advanced from Tyre into Galilee, and an army under Timotheus laid waste Gilead beyond the Jordan. The former was defeated by Simon, and the latter by Judas. Yet on account of the insecurity of the territory beyond Jordan, Judas deemed it best to remove the population into Judea.

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### DEATH OF ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

Thus in the year 164 B.C., the leader of the Maccabees saw his wishes fully accomplished. All the province of Judea was in his hands, and the prospect dawned of rest and prosperity. This prospect seemed more fully assured by the death of the Syrian monarch, whose infatuated malignity had so nearly brought the Jewish race to ruin. Antiochus expired under a loathsome disease, and amid horrible suffering, bodily and mental, in a small town among the mountains of Parætacene. Historians agree in affirming his mind to have been tormented by remorse and terrible apparitions; says Polybius, for his outrage on a Persian temple, in attempting to despoil which he had been repulsed; say the Hebrew writers, for his sacrilege and barbarities in Judea. The foe of Israel and the persecutor of the truth had fallen, and Judas might now hope to consummate his plans for his country's prosperity. But he was soon summoned to contend anew for his dominions.

On the death of Epiphanes, his son Antiochus Eupator succeeded to the throne, supported by Lysias, in opposition to the claims of his uncle Demetrius, at this time a hostage at Rome. One of the first attempts of his brief reign was to recover Palestine. For this purpose, Lysias once more appeared on the Idumean frontier, with an army of 100,000 foot and 20,000 horse; and in addition to these, thirty-two elephants, a new and a terrific spectacle, as each bore a tower containing thirty-two warriors, and was escorted by 1000 foot soldiers and 500 cavalry.

With this overwhelming force, Lysias besieged Bethsura, one of the chief towns on the south, which had been fortified. Judas immediately hastened with the troops at his command to relieve Bethsura, and boldly attacked the besieging army. In this battle his younger brother Eleazar, that he might teach his countrymen to make light of danger from the armed elephants, rushed forward, and clearing his way through the ranks of the enemy till he had reached one of them, he stabbed it in the belly, and was crushed to death by its fall. Judas and his troops fought with their usual valour; but their efforts were this time unavailing against such an enormous force. Judas retreated to Jerusalem, and Bethsura was forced to surrender to the enemy.



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### RENEWED INVASIONS OF PALESTINE.

The Syrian army, after this, advanced to the siege of the metropolis, and the city must at last have surrendered at discretion, had not more urgent perils demanded the presence of Lysias at Antioch. A treaty was concluded by which the troops of Antiochus were admitted into the city; but immediately, in violation of the treaty, they levelled its fortifications to the ground. At Antioch, Demetrius, having escaped from Rome, gained possession of the throne, and in ensuing battles defeated his nephew and slew both him and Lysias. With regard to Judea, he adopted a different policy from that of his predecessors. Instead of open war, he availed himself of the influence of a faction amongst the Jews themselves, in order to destroy the authority of Judas. In alliance with a disaffected party in Judea, composed of the old apostate faction and of those who envied the ascendancy of the Maccabees, he espoused the claims of Alcimus, one of their number, to the priesthood. The policy adopted was not now to extirpate the Jewish religion; and thus far a pretext remained for the submission of the lukewarm. Under pretence of supporting Alcimus, in reality to regain the dominion of Judea, Demetrius sent a large army to invade the province.

### THE LAST BATTLE AND DEATH OF JUDAS MACCABEUS.

Now was the time to test the gratitude and fidelity of the Jewish people to their heroic deliverer. With such bands as had followed his father from Modin to the mountains, with such a compact though diminished force as remained to him at Mizpeh, before the attack on Ptolemy, Judas could yet have struck a decisive blow on the invading army. But many of his countrymen, thinking the chief peril to be over, looked on in this crisis with indifference or shrunk back in fear, and the Maccabean general could number only 800 followers on the day when he had to encounter the thousands of Syria. With this little band left him, however, it was not in his nature to retreat from peril. They advanced under their ancient banner, headed by Judas, and broke the serried ranks before them. They routed one wing of the enemy, but were soon encompassed and beaten down by overwhelming numbers, and could only attest in death their

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devotedness to their country. Their heroic leader was amongst the slain.

Thus nobly fell the bravest of the sons of Mattathias; but not till he had virtually achieved the high objects of the war. He had put an end to the tragedies which had marked the streets of Jerusalem with the blood of the faithful. He had freed the holy temple from heathen abominations, which to the devout Israelite it was a horror only to name. He had rallied the expiring hope of his people, and in a manner regenerated the national character. He had overthrown the armies of the Syrian persecutor, and driven his generals with shame and humiliation back to Antioch. He had reconsecrated the temple, and revived its sacred duties. He had restored the Sabbatical worship of the synagogue throughout the land, in its towns and hamlets. He had secured from blight and flame the manuscripts of Scripture, and made the sacred oracles again vocal in the private dwelling and in the weekly assembly. He had gained security and repose for the tillage of the field and the training of the vine; and though his death eclipsed for a moment the hope of his country, and these noble results seemed again brought into jeopardy, the effective character of his services was seen in the permanence of the change he had wrought, and in the ultimate success of the war which, after his death, was continued with unabated energy and with unretracted vows by his surviving brothers, Jonathan and Simon.

Besides this, Judas, reflecting on the precarious condition of a small province situate between the great monarchies of Syria and Egypt, had decided on seeking the alliance of that haughty Republic which was now extending its influence to the dominions of the East. He thought it better for his country that it should be guarded by the tolerant rule of Rome, than torn piecemeal between neighbouring tyrants. His embassy had arrived at Rome, and had been accepted before his last battle was fought; but the mandate which was on its way, peremptorily to forbid the interference of Demetrius in the affairs of Palestine, came too late to prevent the last overwhelming invasion, or to save Judas from the consequences of his reckless heroism. On his tomb, on the fifth of the seven pillars which rose over the family sepulchre

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at Modin, might be inscribed the honourable fact that, though he had fallen, he had freed his country.

“ Thy days are done, thy fame begun,  
Thy country's strains record  
The triumphs of her chosen son,  
The slaughter of his sword ;  
The deeds he did, the fields he won,  
The freedom he restored.

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free  
Thou shalt not taste of death !  
The generous blood that flowed from thee  
Disdained to sink beneath ;  
Within our veins its currents be,  
Thy spirit on our breath !

Thy name our charging hosts along  
Shall be the battle word !  
Thy fall, the theme of choral song  
From virgin voices pour'd !  
To weep would do thy glory wrong ;  
Thou shalt not be deplored.

HEBREW MELODIES.

### JONATHAN MACCABEUS.

We must now follow the events of the apparently hopeless warfare under the auspices of the youngest of the sons of Mattathias. Only himself and an elder brother, Simon, were now left. In the campaigns of the last five years (166—161) the father and three of the sons had been numbered with the dead. The father had expired in peace at Modin ; John, Eleazar, and Judas had fallen in battle. Simon, though the second of the family, and, like his brother, brave and energetic, had resigned his claims in favour of Judas, and now, after the death of the latter, he willingly gave up the lead to the more enterprising daring of his youngest brother.

After the battle in which Judas fell, and in which, doubtless, Jonathan and Simon had fought at his side, but had escaped with life, the faction of Alcimus ruled at Jerusalem, and used its power without mercy against the adherents of Judas, many of whom were put to death amid torture and insult. These very cruelties, however, tended but to revive the determination and recruit the bands of the Maccabees. Jonathan, with a small force, lay concealed in the wilderness of Tekoah, having the Jordan on one side and a morass on the other.

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In this retreat they were attacked by Bacchides, and repulsed his troops with great loss ; but deeming their position unsafe, and in danger of being surrounded, they swam the river and escaped. But soon after this, Alcimus, the unpatriotic high-priest, died ; and Bacchides, the Syrian general, after various attempts to surprise and overpower the troops of Jonathan, was compelled at last, probably through the dread of Rome, to withdraw his forces from Judea, and to form with Jonathan a treaty of peace on honourable terms. Thus Jonathan became the full and acknowledged ruler of Judea ; although garrisons, both at Jerusalem and in other towns, composed of Syrians and apostate Jews, still defied his authority.

## REVOLUTIONS AT ANTIOCH.

It will have been observed that our narrative of the Maccabean struggle is necessarily complicated with events at Antioch. As the struggle was one of resistance to the oppressions of that monarchy, we have to take account of the changes in the succession of its rulers. These were rapid and sudden after the death of Antiochus Epiphanes. Not long after the treaty with Jonathan, the reign of Demetrius was disturbed by the pretensions of Alexander Balas, who gave himself out to be another son of Antiochus Epiphanes, and was supported in his claim, as usual, by the crafty policy of Rome. The support of Jonathan in this crisis was courted both by Demetrius and Alexander. The former gave him power to levy forces, and restored the hostages in his hands. Jonathan was thus enabled to become once more master of Jerusalem, though not of its fortress. But Alexander, also at the head of an army, offered him the high-priesthood, exemption from all tribute, the surrender of all prisoners ; and, in addition to magnificent donations for the repair of the city and the expenses of the temple, he engaged to put him in possession of the important town of Ptolemais on the coast. Jonathan immediately accepted these larger concessions, and gave his effective support to Alexander Balas. In virtue of the authority he had now acquired, and in the absence of all worthier claimants, the very priesthood having been of late so fatally corrupted, Jonathan assumed the pontifical robe, and in his person commenced the dynasty of the Asmonean Princes—a dynasty which united the priesthood with the civil rule.

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the circumstances of the times seemed to have rendered indispensable as well as safe.

The contest for the throne of Syria continued. Alexander defeated and slew his rival Demetrius; but was soon after himself overthrown by Demetrius Nicator, the son of the former. Demetrius made still larger concessions to Jonathan, and treated him with great distinction when he visited him at Antioch. But Demetrius again was driven from the throne by another competitor, Antiochus Theos, son of Alexander Balas, and compelled to flee into Parthia. By the new monarch Jonathan was confirmed in his authority, and his brother Simon was appointed captain-general of all the country, from the ladder of Tyre to the river of Egypt. Thus the sons of Mattathias, the former quiet patriarch of Modin, gained by every change; and the powerful monarchy, whose tyranny a few years before had brought the Jewish race to the verge of extinction, was now itself torn by rival pretensions and wasted by civil war.

But, unhappily, we have to record the untimely fate of this Maccabean Prince. After an unsettled reign of about ten years (153—144) Jonathan fell a victim to the treachery of Tryphon, the general of Antiochus Theos. Having trusted himself in his power by entering within the walls of Ptolemais with only a few followers, the gates were shut, and Jonathan was put to death. Thus, when in prospect of a long and prosperous reign, fell the youngest of the Maccabees, and the first of those who were formally installed in the priesthood and civil government, and who were designated, from the name of Asamon their grandfather, the Asmonean Princes.

### SIMON MACCABEUS.

(144 B.C.)

The years during which Jonathan had possessed the supreme command had strengthened his influence amongst his countrymen, and had accustomed the nation to the ascendancy of a family to which it owed its recent deliverance. The disaffection of the envious had been overawed, and the hostility of apostate Jews had been effectually crushed. It had become evident that, as the Maccabean family, uninfluenced at first by personal ambition, had heroically committed themselves to the war, solely at the call of religion and their country,

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and amid perils and reverses had achieved the deliverance of Judea, so in them were centred the attachments and confidence of the people, and on their courage and energy depended the future security of the kingdom. By the choice, or at least full concurrence, of the mass of the nation, Jonathan had become the legitimate sovereign of Judea. Accordingly, at his death, the people, stricken with alarm at the barbarous murder of one who had guarded their freedom so nobly, committed the government and priesthood at once to Simon, the last survivor of the Maccabees.

Simon was the second son of Mattathias, and though he had relinquished the lead to his younger brothers, first to Judas, and then to Jonathan, the youngest of all, he fully shared in the noble qualities of his family, and had borne a distinguished part in every campaign and battle. He alone was now left of all that youthful brotherhood, who had gone forth so fearlessly with their father on the memorable evening after Apelles had perished before the heathen altar. Some twenty years had elapsed since then, of warfare, of trying vicissitude, and of unlooked-for successes. The last ten years had been comparatively calm and prosperous under his brother's vigorous government. But the treacherous death of that brother, and the still insecure and unsettled state of Judea, must have alarmed him once more for the future prospects of his country. He had two sons, named Judas and John Hyrcanus; nor is mention made of any other surviving descendants of Mattathias. We shall see, before long, that this small remnant is still further tragically diminished.

Simon took instant measures for guarding his own dominions and avenging his brother's murder. Although Tryphon had cleared his way to the throne of Antioch by the murder of his young sovereign, Antiochus Theos, and by the previous murder of Jonathan, who had lent his support to Antiochus, Demetrius the fugitive monarch, and the true heir to the throne, was still left, and to him Simon resolved to give his most vigorous adhesion. Demetrius was ultimately successful against Tryphon; and in return for the efficient aid rendered by Simon, he gave the latter the full *recognition of the independence* of Judea (141 B.C.) Simon had now ample security to carry out his plans for the prosperity of the country. He fortified Bethsura on the Idumean side, and Jor

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principal harbour on the coast. He reduced Gazara, and at length, having compelled the Syrian garrison in Jerusalem to surrender, he not only destroyed the citadel, but levelled the hill on which Antiochus had built it, so that no elevation remained to command the temple.

During the ensuing years of Simon's reign, though these were not many, Judea began again to brighten with gladness and prosperity. With but light tribute, with a soil of proverbial fertility, the alarms of warfare were no longer heard, nor the sound of the anvil as the shield and sword were preparing for warriors, but instead of these, the din of commerce and the toils of husbandry. The fields, the villages, the cities resumed their former aspect. "The ancient men sat all in the streets communing together of the wealth of the land, and the young men put on glorious apparel." Above all, the homes of Judea were sacred from the intrusion of the spoiler, the services of piety were restored, and the taint of idol worship no more defiled the land. In order to gain permanent protection for his country, Simon followed up a second embassy sent by his brother Jonathan to Rome, by the gift of a shield, weighing one thousand pounds of solid gold.

Meanwhile, at Antioch, Demetrius, having undertaken an expedition against the Parthians, was taken prisoner, and Antiochus Sidates, his brother, succeeded him. He was not willing to surrender so fully as Demetrius had done, the hold on Palestine. He made one attempt more to recover the province, and an army, under his general Cendebæus, invaded the country. This time Simon, now advanced in age, entrusted the command of his forces to his two sons, Judas and John Hyrcanus, who fully realized their father's hopes. They defeated Cendebæus at Azotus, and returned crowned with victory.

The fate of the Maccabean race was again luring. After a prosperous reign of seven years, Simon and his elder son Judas were cut off by a domestic conspiracy. Ptolemy, son of Abubus, had married the daughter of Simon. This traitor was induced by secret offers to assassinate the father and son. He made an attempt also to surprise the younger son, John Hyrcanus, who happened to be absent at Gazara, but fortunately in this attempt he failed.

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### JOHN HYRCANUS.

(135 B.C.)

Thus the last of the sons of Mattathias perished. One stem alone of the Maccabean race was left; and the hopes of the nation now centred on John Hyrcanus, the grandson of Mattathias. He had fortunately eluded the attempt to seize him at Gazara, and with the hereditary energy of his race, he defeated the conspiracy between the assassin and Antiochus. At Jerusalem he was received with general acclamation, and proclaimed high-priest and ruler of the country. An invasion in the following year endangered, for the last time in this age, the independence of Judea. Hyrcanus and his forces were reduced to extremity at Jerusalem, and he was under necessity of submitting to tribute. But four years later, Antiochus himself was deprived of his throne by his brother Demetrius, who had escaped from the Parthians. During the contest between them, Hyrcanus finally cast off the yoke, and Judea became a kingdom, which retained its independence till, on the invasion of Pompey about seventy years later, it fell under the Roman dominion.

The reign of John Hyrcanus was long and prosperous. He took various towns beyond the Jordan. What rejoiced his countrymen much more, he took Sichem, a city belonging to their hated neighbours, the Samaritans; and, further, he destroyed the temple on Mount Gerizim, which for two hundred years had stood an object of scorn and execration to the genuine Israelite. It was razed to the ground, and never after rebuilt. He built the Castle of Baris (afterwards the Antonia of Herod) within the fortifications round the temple. He died after a reign of twenty-nine years. But the further prosecution of this part of Jewish history is not within our present design. The Asmonean dynasty flourished till the usurpation of Herod. The reigns of Aristobulus and of Alexandra (the two sons of Hyrcanus), and of Hyrcanus II (a grandson), fill up the interval to the time of Antipater, the father of Herod. It was the last direct descendant of old Mattathias who became the unhappy bride of Herod the Great—Mariamne, the most beautiful of the maidens of Israel and the most lamented in her fate. Her descendants, and not those of Herod's other wives, were the sovereigns of provinces



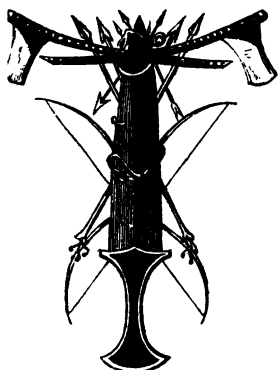
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near Judea, till after the fall of Jerusalem. King Agrippa, who earnestly tried to avert its ruin, and Berenice, his sister, the object of Titus' admiration, who tore her hair in anguish and wept aloud at the infatuation of the city, are the last names that history mentions of the Asmonean family.

On an elevated spot at Modin, around a sepulchre, arose seven pillars, which remained for many generations a conspicuous sea-mark for the coasting mariner. There rested Mattathias and his wife and their five sons. But for the valour of this family, Judea had anticipated her fall by one hundred and fifty years. But this was not the intention of Providence. The Jews were to have a higher restoration, and to attain prosperity which exceeded that of all their previous history. Though partially under a foreign rule, that rule at first was mild and tolerant, and consistent with the development of their national resources. Hence, under Herod the Great, Judea became a powerful kingdom, rich in splendid cities, rich in commerce and wealth, rich in population. For this prosperity, it was rescued and reserved by the bold insurrection at Modin. But the nation was preserved as a distinct people, with its institutions, oracles, and history, for an infinitely higher event. It was to continue till, in the fulness of time, Messiah should come and unfold a dispensation which was to embrace the whole world!

THE  
CONQUEST OF CANAAN.

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HE decisive moment has arrived. Moses is dead. Under the direction of the All-Wise, Joshua, the son of Nun, has been appointed in his place. Designated by the Divine hand, proclaimed by Moses, accepted by the priesthood, and welcomed by the people, Joshua has every possible claim to obedience, and, in hard or perilous cases, is directed to seek counsel by the mysterious oracle of which the sovereign pontiff has the custody. A more suitable choice could not have been made.

To a general acquaintance with the land about to be invaded, and to a thorough familiarity with the qualities, and, to some extent, even the persons of his soldiers, Joshua, brave by nature, and thoughtful and prudent by experience, had long shown himself equal to all the calls of war, and (as the result of his many noble qualities) enjoyed the full and unqualified confidence of the Hebrew nation.

That nation was equal to the greatest martial undertakings. Its army amounted to some half a million of fighting men. Their spirit and energy were roused and sustained by the presence of their wives and children. Victory and conquest had also begotten enthusiasm. Not only a basis of operations had been secured in the plains of Moab, but already a moiety of the land was held by the triumphant hosts. The career of the people had now for months been one series of important victories. Flushed with success, the forces were also stimulated by hope and expectation. In a word, the Hebrew people had arrived at that pitch of national excitement and intense

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desire, which disowns difficulties and wins triumphs almost as a matter of course. Having cleared away every obstacle as so much gossamer, they panted to be led against their enemies, that they might enter into their promised inheritance. Not easy is it for us, in these days of scientific warfare, to form an adequate notion of the impulse with which the Israelites were moved onward; and the only instances which can aid our imaginations must be looked for in the fury with which the surges of the northern barbarians dashed one after another against the old and decaying walls of Roman civilization. A whole nation having undergone the severe discipline of a wandering of forty years—a nation without a home, yet with a promised home within sight—a nation of noble blood, with a great ancestry, cherishing a very bright ideal future—a nation not much less lettered than Egypt, and brave as the Arabs of the desert—a nation which alone of all the earth worshipped the true God, and were aware of this their chief distinction—stood there at the entrance of Canaan, and were on the point of demanding admission in a voice which would not be gainsayed.

Yet, in some respects, the invaders were at a disadvantage. The generation which had seen actual warfare on a large scale lay buried in the Wilderness. The present generation might be called freebooters rather than soldiers; and though they had just proved their valour and their ability by subduing the whole eastern line of the Jordan, yet they had had no experience in what may be termed a regular campaign, nor had they shown themselves equal to the capture of regularly fortified places. What could be done by prowess and impetuosity, the Israelites would doubtless effect, when they had passed the river; but where were their battering-rams, their arrow-casting and stone-hurling machines, to which doubtless the Egyptians were indebted for their successful invasion of Canaan? Advantages of this sort they did not possess, nor is there any reason to think that their weapons were in any way superior to the weapons of those on whom they were about to fall.

If these drawbacks threw a cloud over the prospects of the Hebrews, they were fully counterbalanced by the unity which pervaded and characterized all their operations. Their object was single and definite, and it was nothing less than the

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capture of the land. Their forces were of one blood, and yielded ready obedience to one leader. The national unity had the greater potency because it was a combination of independent, self-reliant, disciplined, and therefore powerful minds. The compact mass was wielded by Joshua at his pleasure. He could consequently choose his own time for the assault; he could make it in any manner he judged best, selecting the point of attack without let or hindrance.

On their side, the Canaanites possessed formidable means of resistance, and, had they in general been united, might have driven their assailants back into the Wilderness. This, indeed, they had already done; for when an ill-starred incursion was made, just after the return of the spies, the southern clans fell on the invaders, and punished them severely for their rashness. The attempt disclosed to the Canaanites what was the aim and purpose of Israel; nor from that day, during forty years, could the inhabitants of the threatened land tell at what moment the assault would be made. Living with the knowledge that an invading army was hovering on its southern frontier, the Canaanites, it may be supposed, would neglect no opportunity to increase and improve their means of defence. If, therefore, they were strong at the time when the spies passed through the land, stronger, doubtless, were they now. The neglects and decays occasioned by prosperity and ease had been repaired. Fresh sources of national vitality had been opened up. Attempts may have been made to combine the scattered elements into effective union. Never could tribes have greater reason for coalescing than the Canaanites. Yet no common confederacy was formed, and the combinations which actually existed proved inadequate to the occasion. Indeed, the repellent and emasculating passion of fear seems to have been the most active of their sentiments. The great achievements of the Israelites struck terror into their souls; their hearts melted like wax in the fire. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the people were delivered up, bound hand and foot, to their impetuous invaders.

In this condition of mind, we probably find the chief reason why the Western Canaanites came not forth to assist the Eastern. They must have felt that their own battle was being fought when Israel attacked Sihon and Og.\* Yet they

\* Josh. ii. 10.

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not only render no aid, but leave the passage of the river undefended.

Here, however, another consideration comes into view. It was spring when the invasion of Canaan began. At that season of the year, the Jordan is full of water.\* Its fords, in consequence, would be covered. Precautions would be needless. A broad, deep, and rapid stream, was a sufficient wall of defence. What could the Hebrews do? Possessed of this feeling of security, the Canaanites may well have disregarded their foe, while they prepared their defences for a later time, when their natural rampart would have passed away.

And here we seem to be invited to say a word or two on the extraordinary character of some of the events which attended the invasion and guaranteed its success. The philosophy of the matter we leave untouched; it is with history we have to do; and we must declare that the parts of the history will not hang together, nor form a consistent whole, if you leave out the cementing element of miracle! An instance to the point has led to these remarks. The Canaanites did not dispute the passage of the Jordan, because they believed the Jordan impassable at that hour. And impassable it was, by ordinary means. Yet, though impassable, the river was actually passed; and that first step was set on the western bank which led to the subjugation of the land. We say, then, that miracle here is an indispensable link in the chain of causes and effects. Remove that link, and the whole falls to the ground, broken in pieces, and incapable of being put together again. Equally, without the cementing element of miracle, is it impossible to bring the Israelites on to the plains of Shittim, where they now stand. There they are, because by God's own hand they were prevented from famishing during forty years in a barren desert. There they are, because, before they entered that desert, they were rescued

\* The vale of the Jordan sinks from the highlands of Judah by three terraces—the highest, the middle, the lowest. The lowest, full of trees and undergrowths, leads to what may strictly be called the banks or margin of the river. About Easter, these banks are now partially overflowed, so as greatly to augment the width of the river, which then flows with a violent and turbid current. The sacred text clearly implies a greater or less inundation of the lowest terrace, nor have Dr. Robinson and others succeeded in explaining away this meaning, nor in disproving the alleged fact. See Josh. iii. 15, iv. 18; 1 Chron. xii. 15; Isaiah, viii. 7; Ecclesiasticus, xxiv. 26; also Jer. xii. 5; xlix. 19. On the passages in Jeremiah, see, however, "Hitzig's Commentary."

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out of the murderous hands of Pharaoh and his countless hosts. And that miraculous rescue was, under Divine Providence, destined to exert a powerful influence in facilitating the conquest of the land; for the sound of that storm which buried the Egyptians in the Gulf of Heroopolis reverberated from the hill-side rocks of Canaan with fearful effect.\*

These facts are testified in a simple manner by Rahab, whose conduct in concealing the spies they serve to explain: "And before they (the spies) were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; and she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you; for we have heard how the *Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when ye came out of Egypt*; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan; and as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man because of you, for the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath." And the certainty of the truth of this indirect testimony to miracle, and of the general statement, is vouched for by the trust the witness unhesitatingly reposed in the Israelites. Clearly, she was assured of their resistless power. On that account she incurred the risk of hiding the spies. On that account, she confided to the invaders the care of her dearest relatives: "Now, therefore," continued she, "I pray you swear by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also show kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token that ye will save alive my father and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."†

\* It deserves notice that the emissaries of the king of Jericho "pursued after the spies the way to Jordan *unto the fords*." (ii. 7.) This fact confirms the statement made in the text that the Canaanites relied on the fulness of the river; for since the Israelites had not passed while the river was fordable, they could not pass when the river was full. We have too, here, one of those delicate indirect testimonies which cannot be forged. Some time, as the scriptural narrative shows, intervened between the sending of the spies and the passage of the river. The espial was made while the river was fordable, consequently the spies were pursued to the fords. Several days after the Canaanites were at their ease, for the river was full. Their security was Joshua's opportunity. It is a fact that the Jordan suddenly rises, and few days is a deep and impetuous torrent.

† Josh. ii. 8—13. If Rahab was a harlot, harlotry then did not b

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There is one incident on record in the early period of this history, which shows that the divine enters as an integral element in the conquest of the land. The armies of Israel are now on the western side. Joshua, as it would appear, was engaged in taking a close survey of Jericho, when an angelic appearance flashed upon his sight. "He lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay, but as Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my Lord unto his servant? And the Captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy: and Joshua did so."\* This presence proclaims its own divinity. I find the proclamation in the authoritative tone of the passage, specially in the imperative command, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy"—since I am here. That is the utterance of a divine consciousness. And the utterance and the appearance betoken the special presence of God with the hosts of Israel. Clear, then, is it that we are not about to study an ordinary history. Clear is it that, in the opinion of the narrator, the divine here is interwoven with the human. And to us it seems equally clear that the divine verifies itself as divine, by the impressions which it bears of the Divine Majesty.

If these views are correct, then must we commence our studies of the conquest of Canaan, not with an aversion for, but an expectation of, the miraculous. If that Divine presence is to be captain of the invading armies, his ethereal sword will flash forth, the brightness of his silvery helmet will dazzle and blind the enemy, and the might of his resistless arm will crush opposition.

As a result of the Divine guidance under which he moved, Joshua thought it his duty to act with circumspection. Desirous

moral depravity that ensues from it now, as is clear from the strong domestic affections the woman manifests. Our own mind strongly inclines to that rendering of the word which would make her a hostess—a rendering for which much may be said, and this not least, namely, that it makes the narrative of one consistent hue.

\* Josh. v. 13—15.

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of ascertaining the actual condition of the Canaanites, he resolved to send two spies into their land. Almost immediately over against the Hebrew encampment lay the city of Jericho, in a wide, luxuriant, and most lovely vale of the Jordan, formed by the recession of the mountains on both sides of the river. From its position, and from its early civilization, Jericho stood at the head of the cities of Canaan; and while its capture was an indispensable preliminary to the invasion, its possession was an almost equally certain guarantee of entire success. If, however, appearances were to be trusted, the reduction of the city was next to impossible. What treasures, what sources of power, struck the eyes of Joshua, as, in the season of spring, he gazed on that earthly paradise from the eastern shore! Tropical fruits in rich abundance, in great variety, and in unusual beauty and magnitude, rose from the river's edge, and covered the country for miles round. Here groves of balsams filled the air with fragrant breezes, which were wafted across the Jordan. There forests of palms rose in all their beauty, already vindicating for the place the enviable name of "the city of Palms." Swarms of bees, which almost shaded the sun, indicated the vegetable affluence on which they lived. Drove of gazelles basked in the genial rays of heaven, frisked up and down the lawns, or tranquilly browsed the hill-sides. Delvers and ploughmen were everywhere busy. Acres of barley almost invited the sickle, and immense fields of wheat were coming into bloom. Then what flights of birds in the air; what melodies from every bush; while the insect world luxuriated, as if the whole had been made for them alone! The city itself, too, as it stood there on an elevation, backed and flanked by protecting hills, had an imposing look, with its thick and lofty walls, in the construction of which the highest skill had been expended. Good reason, then, had the Hebrew commander-in-chief to send two men to spy secretly, saying, "Go view the land, even Jericho."

The spies obeyed their orders. They crossed the Jordan, went to Jericho, and, aided by Rahab, acquired the requisite information. Returning, they reported to Joshua: "Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint (melt) because of us."\*

This encouraging news induced Joshua to take instant mea-



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tures for the invasion. He moved the army down to the river side, when, lo! he found the fords covered, and the stream rising with great rapidity. An interval of three days was spent in consultation and preparation. Then the officers went through the ranks, and bore to the people their leader's commands. First among these was a command for a universal purification. The presence of a holy God required a holy people.\* And that presence, already presignified, was now expressly promised. "And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee." The purification took place; and Israel was prepared to follow the leading hand of God. But who should occupy the post of honour? The two and a half tribes already located in Perea were ready to aid their yet unsettled brethren, and in courage and skill they were fully approved. Let them be at the head; if the Canaanites come down to dispute the passage, they will speedily clear a way for the nation. Yes, such a leadership would have been wise had the issue depended on merely human forces; but that broad and rushing stream was insensible to battle-axes, swords, and spears. Resources of a loftier kind were to be called into play on behalf of Israel; God's own arm was to bring salvation; therefore God's own symbol was to lead the way.

## THE PASSAGE OF JORDAN.

The morning of a new era in the history of God's chosen people has dawned in the eastern skies, casting beams of rich purple and crimson light on the west Jordanic hill-sides, whence they are reflected on and through the Hebrew encampment. Forthwith all therein is astir. A bustle and a din, as of mustering myriads of armed men and migratory families, go up to heaven, and then all is as still as the hour of evening prayer. After a short pause, during which every heart bows down in worship of the present Jehovah, twelve men, clad in priestly robes, approach the river. The moment their feet touch the water, the stream divides, and, retreating southwardly and northwardly, leaves an open space wide enough for the passage of the hosts of Israel. The priests advance, bearing the ark, till they have reached the middle of the river, and

\* Josh. iii. 5, comp. Exod. xix. 10.

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there they stop. The whole nation, preceded by the Pereans, follow the footsteps of the priests. The moment the priests have come to a stand-still, twelve men hasten forward, and, from the spot where the priests stand, taking each a large stone, bear the burden to the opposite shore. Speedily are they followed by the whole people. All pass over in safety, and the priests with the ark leave not the bed of the stream until the last family is on the western bank. Then the twelve stones are brought and set up as a permanent memorial, declaring to all posterity that Jehovah brought the twelve sons of Jacob over into the land he had promised to them, even as, by the might of his power and the goodness of his love, he had aforetime led Israel in safety through the storm of waters of the Red Sea. Ere, however, the priests quit their station in the Jordan, Joshua erects there another memorial—built up of twelve representative and commemorative stones. When, finally, “the soles of the priests’ feet were lifted up unto the dry land, the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before.”\*

The Israelites were in Canaan, but were they safe? Might they not be driven back into that swelling and impetuous flood? Forty thousand Pereans stood in arms on the side of Jericho to protect the nation against immediate danger. Having thrown up this rampart before his people, Joshua at once proceeded to measures requiring instant attention. A camp was formed at Gilgal, lying to the east of Jericho. The nation was thus defended at once by the river and by the transjordanians.

This cover was the more necessary because a religious rite of national significance had now to be performed. Calling together the princes of the people, the heads of tribes, and the heads of families, Joshua reminded them of the requirements of the law, as announced by Moses, in anticipation of the great undertaking upon which they were now entering. “Receive ye all the sign of the Lord’s covenant, and be ye circumcised this day, as the Lord hath commanded. And when the reproach of Egypt shall have been rolled away, then shall the Lord cast out before you the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites—seven nations greater and mightier than you,” etc.†

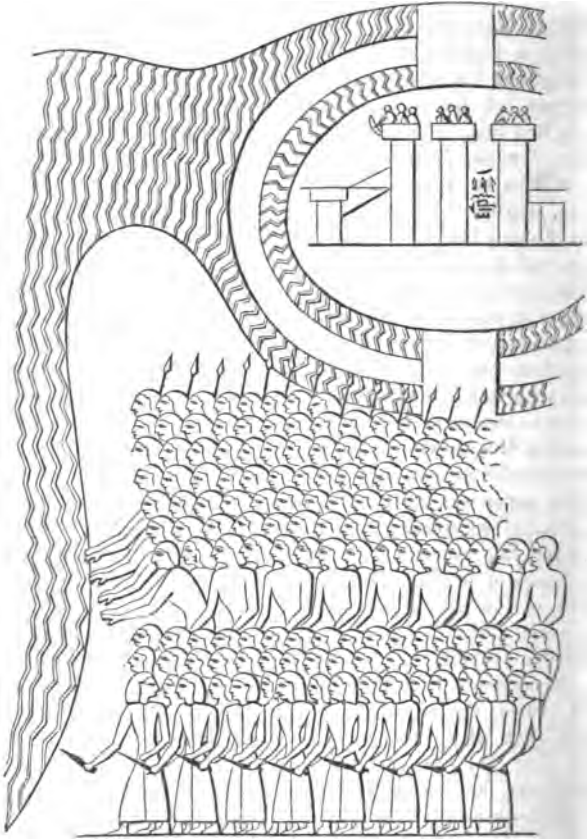
\* Josh. iv. 18.

† See Deut. vii.

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The commands of the Lord were borne throughout the tribes and families of Israel ; all were circumcised ; the passover was eaten ; and thus the Lord's covenant was firmly established in the midst of his people. On the morrow the supply of manna ceased, for the people ate of the old corn of Canaan, and were filled.

While these religious and social events were proceeding, Jericho was beleaguered by the Pereans. The city was



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strong, and the resistance being obstinate, the siege was closely pressed. On page 10 is, not improbably, a picture of the city and its defenders.\*

In the centre you behold the city, surrounded by lofty towers, in which are defendants repelling the assailants by means of the bow. Surrounding the city is a fosse. This



inner fosse is connected with an outer fosse, by means of a bridge. Across the bridge, phalanxes of infantry have come forth to assault the besiegers with sword and spear. Observe in what order they advance, and mark how prudently they are protected by the river. If you would judge of the arduousness of Joshua's enterprise, you must know that the well-fortified city is filled with men like this, all equipped with corslet, helmet, battle-axe, and lance, and showing in their features a strength and determination not easily surpassed. And that you may be

sure those archers on the towers are well able to do serious



execution, study this group of bowmen—observe the size of their bows, the tension of their arms, their steady eye, their stout and firm attitude, their stature, and their discipline.

The siege proceeded until all the sorties were effectually beaten back, all efforts at diversion were defeated, all possibility of repulse

\* The view, taken from the Egyptian monuments, is that of the city of Khita (Hittites), assailed by troops from the land of the Nile.

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was taken away. The city was shut up, being closely hemmed in on all sides; "none went out and none came in." The hour for the assault had arrived. To intimidate the already dejected garrison, Joshua resolved to display his forces to the greatest advantage. Accordingly, on each of six successive days was that mysterious ark, under whose awfulegis the Jordan had been crossed and the land smitten with amazement and alarm, carried round the doomed city, preceded by armed legions and by seven priests, each blowing a trumpet of ram's-horn, and followed by other armed legions. On the seventh day, in the grey dawn of morning, the terrible procession set out once more, but now with seven-fold effect, for they compassed the city seven times, and when the last time the priests blew a seven-fold blast, all the beleaguers shouted as one man. With that overpowering shout, the walls miraculously fell; the Canaanites were awe-stricken, their hearts melted within them, they let their arms fall, and the defence ceased. The Israelites, seizing the auspicious moment, went up into the city, each man where he stood; and they utterly destroyed all that was in the city with the edge of the sword, and "they burnt the city with fire; only the silver, and gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the Lord."

The report of that marvellous conquest went up from the vale, bearing dismay into all hearts. So the Lord was with Joshua, and his fame passed throughout the country.\*

The intelligence, if disheartening to many, could not fail to rekindle martial heroism in some. General reanimation was not improbable, and possibly a common confederation might be formed. The Canaanites had now learnt what kind of a foe they had to deal with, and must have felt they had come to a crisis in their national history. Revolving these things, Joshua determined on dispatch.

There is a tongue of land immediately above Jericho, which is formed by two streams descending into the Jordan vale. The possession of this district was of urgent necessity, since the two water-courses gave ready and sheltered approaches to the Israelite camp, and since on the upland lay concentrated much of the strength of southern Canaan, including Jebus, its

\* Josh. vi. 27.

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chief stronghold. On the other hand, if Joshua could succeed in seizing this locality, he would not only make his position at Gilgal secure, but obtain a safe basis for operations along the hills of Judah, and on the western declivities of the two vales just mentioned. The more southern led up to Jerusalem, the northern to Ai (Hai) and Bethel. It was scarcely prudent at the very outset of the campaign to attack Jebus, and an attack on Ai was strongly recommended by the consideration that, once masters of that place and its vicinity, the Hebrews would be in the midst of their patriarchal home, and so be surrounded with ancestral recollections the most inspiring. Having a footing there, the present generation, who by reason of their youth lacked national recollections, ties, and impulses, would see a practical realisation of the bright words they had heard, and receive an impressive assurance of the fulfilment of all the promises of the Lord.

Accordingly, their general, who some forty years before had visited the spot, and could take his steps with knowledge as well as caution, resolved to ascend to the uplands by the more northern wady. It was, however, necessary to ascertain the present condition of the place. Accordingly, he sent two men with instructions to view the country.\* They went up and brought back word that a body of some two or three thousand men would suffice to seize on Ai, as the place was small. By Joshua's orders a detachment ascended and fell on the place. They were beaten back and pursued. Great was Joshua's disappointment and grief. The consequences of the repulse might be most serious. To employ the characteristic and picturesque archaisms of the Sacred Volume—"Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads; and Joshua said, Alas, Lord God,

\* The words are, "Go up and view the country." The passage was literally a going up, an ascent, for the district stands about 2,000 feet above the sea, and the camp at Gilgal is below the level of the sea. This tacit reference to the peculiar formation of the country is frequently repeated in the text: thus, "the men went up," "let not all the people go up," "there went up," "they smote them in the going down." Our present exact knowledge of the country is but of recent date. Thus there has arisen a new confirmation of the reality of the Biblical narratives, and a new source of Biblical illustrations. See this subject handled in "Scripture Illustrated from Recent Discoveries in the Geography of Palestine," by the author of "The People's Dictionary of the Bible."

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wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side of Jordan. O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies; for the Canaanite and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth? And the Lord said, Israel hath sinned, for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff; therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies; neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed thing from among you. Up, sanctify the people."

Joshua obeyed the divine command. Discovering the criminal, Achan, the son of Carmi, he ordered him to be put to death. Though seized with the spirit of cupidity, the unhappy man was not destitute of religion or patriotism; he confessed his fault, and submitted to its punishment, as one who loved his own people even in his extremity. The property was discovered, and the criminal, together with his family and goods, was stoned to death and burned to ashes. Thus terribly was sin punished; thus was God's law avenged; and thus was Israel sanctified.

The invasion of Canaan was not a war of ambition, nor a plundering foray; it was a religious enterprise; and as a religious enterprise it required to be kept pure from earthly passions and sinful acts of self-will. The moment the warfare descended to plunder for personal enrichment, it became robbery; and robbery is a crime. If Joshua and his army were to turn to the service of human and personal interests, God would leave them; their cause ceased to be his cause; and their cause could continue to secure his countenance and aid only by a rigid adherence to the religious purposes for which the invasion had been commanded and undertaken. What was true of Joshua, is universally true. War is either an imperative and solemn duty, or a flagrant crime. If it has not for its object to vindicate the laws and execute the will of God, war is the hugest of wrongs, and the blackest of sins. But when it is imposed on men by the necessities of conscience, then does war become an awful but imperious duty, and may rise into the noblest of sacrifices. A duty and a sacrifice it

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was to Joshua and his hosts; but only on condition that they fought for Jehovah, and not for themselves.

By means of a skilful stratagem, the Israelites at length captured Ai. Favoured by the character of the ground, which is full of inequalities—here a high hill, there a deep vale—affording opportunities for ambush, Joshua placed a body of men on the north of the town, and another body on the west. Ignorant that he had enemies in his rear, the king of Ai rushed out to attack the forces whom he saw before him in the west. These, as instructed, immediately gave way and fled. The Canaanites went off after them in hot pursuit. The city, thus bereft of its defenders, was seized by the troops that had been secreted behind it. The place, as well as its inhabitants, was destroyed.

The effect of this achievement was prodigious. Middle Palestine fell at once into the hands of the invaders. The terror occasioned by the destruction of Ai brought calm and security. With becoming piety, Joshua profited by the moment to execute a divine command, and in so doing, to confirm and proclaim Israel's ascendancy. Raising on the summit of Mount Ebal an altar of unhewn stones—a work whose rudeness symbolized the moment of its erection—he there offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings; and on the stones of which the altar was made, he cut a copy of the law of ten commandments. Then he divided the whole people into two halves, setting one half over against Gerizim, and the other half over against Ebal, and read in their hearing alike the blessings and the curses which God had appointed as sanctions of his law. The people heard, bowed their heads, and said, "Amen!" Solemn and impressive event! Israel thus renewed their covenant with God, and on his part God thus assured Israel of his faithfulness. Alas! there were cursings no less than blessings appended to that law, and so weak and sinful is the nation, that occasions of cursing will come, and come in such numbers as, but for God's mercy, to make even that land of milk and honey a curse, and to make life itself a curse. But the Lord is very pitiful, and by that command which Joshua has now fulfilled, he graciously intended not only to comfort his people after their long and wearisome toils, but to strengthen and encourage them for future exertions and trials. Nor was it an inconsiderable triumph which had thus been celebrated



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on behalf of true religion. The heights of Ebal had been polluted with the foulness of idolatry. The fires of Baal had burnt there. Lustful orgies had run riot in those clefts and ravines. But "the gods of the hills" had been driven from their usurped seats. The pure fires of holy incense had burnt up those moral defilements. The law of Jehovah stood there engraven on the durable rock to dismay and defy the priests of wickedness, who fled before the face of the Lord, even as Cain fled after the murder of his brother.

A little south of Ai, and on the tongue of land before mentioned, stood Gibeon—an ancient and independent city, the head of a small commonwealth, comprising the four towns of Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath-Jearim. Alarmed at the successful career of the Hebrews, which they had watched since the departure from Egypt, the united cities in common council determined to resort to stratagem as a means of self-preservation. Could they only extract from Israel a promise of immunity, they would be safe; for the Israelites, as servants of Jehovah, were known to observe their oath. With this view they sent deputies to the camp in the vale of the Jordan. The road lay through a watercourse, having its origin near Gibeon, and was only a few miles in length. With careful preparation, however, they assumed all the appearance of an embassy which had come from a great distance. They appeared before Joshua, and saluting him, said: "We come from a far country, for we have heard of your fame, to make with you a league; swear to us that you will spare our lives, and the lives of our countrymen, and we are your servants, and will give you aid to overcome and possess this land." Joshua looked at their garments and their sandals, and they were worn; at their wine skins, and they were rent; at their bread, and it was mouldy. The overture was very tempting. In haste to accept so promising an offer, Joshua waited not to seek counsel of the Lord; and the league was concluded. It required only three days to reveal the imposture. These men were really neighbours. However, the Israelites respected their oath. They spared the lives of the Gibeonites, but reduced them to servitude.

The defection of the Gibeonite confederacy offended and alarmed the neighbouring princes. Probably regarding this republican stratagem as alike dishonourable and characteristic, they stirred up all their royal chivalry at once to punish the

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renegades and repel the invader. Five monarchs combined for the purpose. These were Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem (Jebus); Hoham, king of Hebron; Piram, king of Jarmuth; Japhia, king of Lachish; and Debir, king of Eglon—Amorite princes who governed the hill-country of Judah and its dependencies. Aware that they were to be the first object of attack, the Gibeonites appealed to Joshua for succour. Marching all night with the eagerness of a divinely-sustained confidence, he fell on the allies, put them to the rout, and pursued them to Beth-horon and Makkedah.

We cannot, however, make this part of our narrative clear without entering into some geographical particulars. Gibeon stood somewhat more than half way up a steep declivity, near the top and on the eastern side of the tongue of land of which we have spoken; consequently, it is not far from the ridge of the highlands which here run along from Hebron to Gerizim. The range, however, sinks somewhat when it comes near Gibeon. Nor is the ridge of considerable breadth. On its western side, that ridge suddenly falls with a general descent westward and southward, mainly formed by a wady, which, widening as it goes down, becomes large and capacious, and runs generally towards the west, until it is interrupted by another wady, coming from the south. Where the two meet, an elevated plain is formed, which issues towards the south-east, in two wadies, having their source in a common point in the uplands of Judah.

Now, Joshua coming up one of the wadies in the tongue of land on the eastern side of the ridge, fell on the Canaanites at Gibeon, drove them over the ridge, followed them to Beth-horon the upper and Beth-horon the nether; and as the fugitives, naturally flying toward their homes in the south, profited, by the nature of the ground, to seek safety in the two water-courses just mentioned, Joshua led his forces over that plain round into those wadies, and there completed his victory.

It was on the occasion of this exploit that those marvellous phenomena occurred which are recorded in Joshua x. 12—15, and which have given rise to so much discussion among learned men. "The sun stood still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon," in order to afford time to Joshua and his intrepid troops to complete the discomfiture of his foes.

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Joshua followed up the advantages he had gained, and reaped a full harvest of victories in the south-west. Not only had he beaten down all opposition over the wide extent of country from Ebal to the borders of the desert: he had also made the Canaanites vile in the eyes of Israel, and so prepared the way for that religious sunderance and antipathy which were essentially required for the establishment of the authority of Jehovah in the land. Far more important than any single defeats, how signal soever, was the moral and religious benefit gained on behalf of God's religion, when not only "the gods of the hills" proved powerless to defend their own territories, but even Moloch and Ashtaroth were compelled to desert their worshippers, and serve the designs of a higher power, Jehovah, whom the invaders worshipped.

Thus ended the first campaign. Its results are—the possession on the part of the Hebrews of the middle and the south of Canaan, their own elevation into a spirit of religious self-reliance and lofty enthusiasm, and the dejection and dismay of one half of the native population. Truly had Jehovah triumphed. The theocracy contemplated by God from the earliest ages, proclaimed by Moses, exemplified under David, and virtually perfected by Jesus, had now set the sole of its foot on its own soil, and was already preparing for that universal dominion which it is destined to attain, and toward which it is now rapidly proceeding before the eyes of all who have eyes to see its triumphs.

A second campaign put the whole of Canaan at the feet of Joshua. Our sources of information are here brief, and appear defective. Whether any, and, if any, what interval elapsed between the defeat at Gibeon and the events we are about to mention, we have no means of judging. But a general rising opened the second campaign. There stood immediately under the south-western foot of Anti-Lebanon, an ancient Canaanite city, by name Hazor, which was under monarchical government. The reigning dynasty was called Jabin.\* The power of the kings of Hazor was great and extensive. At least, the Jabin mentioned in the book of Judges possessed "nine hundred chariots of iron, and twenty

Josh. xi, comp. Judg. iv. 2. If Jabin was the name of an individual, and not of a race or an office, two persons of the same name ruled in Hazor in those early days.

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years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel." The authority of Hazor extended from the northern extremity of the land to the southern. Of the exact nature and degree of that authority we are not informed. Probably it had in process of time become little more than nominal in regard to the more distant dependencies. Yet though for the most part nominal, the authority may have had roots in old connexions and associations, which would sprout and produce fruit when forced into new life by outer appliances. Certainly the position of Hazor was such as to make any strong hand formidable that held the sceptre there. Backed and flanked by the Lebanon mountains, the city was secured from any sudden irruption, whilst being at the outlet of the fertile vale of the Becaa, and near the springs of the Jordan, it was surrounded with the prime sources of true and lasting wealth—means for the augmentation of which it possessed by the readiness of its communications alike with Damascus and the East, with the sheep-walks and pasture-grounds of the Hauran, and with the overflowing abundance of the vale of the Jordan. It may be that these singular advantages had begotten luxury, and luxury issued in weakness.

Roused to action by the imminent peril, Jabin revives old claims, calls into activity slumbering prescriptions, and forms an anti-Hebrew league, extending from Hermon to Idumea. It seems strange that his authority should have prevailed in the centre and the south of the land so soon after the victories gained by Joshua. But national bonds are strong, and the call of a recognised chieftain is very prevailing. Time, however, there must have been for communication to extend from Dan to Beersheba, and for the marshalling of troops which ensued. And it is not easy to understand how the Canaanite forces made their way from south to north, when the Israelites possessed the country from Shechem to Hebron. In the absence of information, conjecture, if allowable, is vain. The record states that the confederate forces of Canaan assembled near the waters of Merom. This gathering of the tribes reminds the student of the gathering of the clans in Scotland in the olden time, and probably the final signal was given by the kindling of watch-fires on the summits of the hills. A fire lighted on Hermon would in an hour be answered by a fire on Safed, which would call forth one on Ebal, a third

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on Gerizim, a fourth on Olivet, and a fifth at Hebron. These few signals would be sufficient to rouse the whole land, and bring out its teeming thousands, armed cap-à-pie, and eager to vindicate their injured honour, and to try the force of northern steel on Israelite frames.

The ardour and the confidence of the Canaanites proved utterly futile. With a skill which shows how good a general Joshua was, the Hebrews took Jabin by surprise, routed his forces, slew countless thousands, and devastated Hazor, the head of the union, with fire.

This one blow broke the strength of the allied powers. But though the tree was felled, there were roots which required to be plucked up. In this labour Joshua spent "a long time,"\* but he took no rest until he had fully accomplished the work given him of God to perform. One of his last achievements was the extermination of the Anakim, remnants of a race whose stature and strength were unusually great, and which fear and fancy magnified into gigantic proportions. Independently of these and other minor conquests, one and thirty kings, with their several territories, were brought into subjection by Joshua.

We have advisedly used the term "subjection," for the most usual phrase, "the destruction of the Canaanites," is not correct, except with great qualifications. An indigenous nation is never destroyed. Extermination, in fact, signifies only general slaughter. Conquerors may expel myriads, may drive myriads into remote or mountainous districts, may put myriads to the sword, but a literal extermination of a people is far beyond their power. In these, our own islands, the Celts were neither destroyed nor driven out by the Saxons, nor were the Saxons extirpated by the Normans. To this hour, Celt, Saxon, and Norman, live together on the soil of England. Whatever may have been the slaughter committed by Israel, it is a simple fact that the Canaanites, and their cities too, were largely spared;† that groups of the original inhabitants continued to inhabit the land by the side of the Hebrews; and that the remnant which lived on after the conquest, was large and powerful enough to make the succeeding period of the Judges very troubled, and to impair, and even sometimes destroy, the purity of the religion of Jehovah.

\* Josh. ix, 18.

† Josh. xi. 13.

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Meanwhile, Joshua was growing old. The land, though subdued, was not divided, except that Gad and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, occupied the eastern side of the Jordan, and Judah and Ephraim had settled on the western. The head-quarters of the army of occupation had been removed from Gilgal to the uplands of the south, and stood now at Shiloh. There Joshua convened a general assembly of the Israelites. For some unassigned reason, they had been "slack to go to possess the land which the Lord God of their fathers had given them."\* The disinclination being reproved, and probably overcome, three men from each of the seven and a half unsettled tribes were chosen, at the request of the aged chief-tain, who were directed to survey, and having made a map of the land † to divide it into so many portions. These portions were assigned to the several tribes, in the following manner.

1. Judah received the middle of Palestine, from Kadesh Barnea and the river of Egypt (El Arish) to the valley, Ben-Hinnom, just south of Jerusalem, and from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. The greater part of the land of Philistia fell to the share of this tribe; but it was unable to acquire permanent possession of this portion of its allotment. The district of Judah was divided into four parts, called the south (Sephela, or the lowlands on the sea); the hill country, or the interior; and the desert, or the eastern side, running along the Dead Sea northwards. The number of cities and towns of this tribe amounted at first to about 125, but it had to cede a part to the tribes of Simeon and Dan.

2. Simeon, one of the smallest tribes, received no district in particular, but took some of the cities which had been possessed by Judah, so that "the inheritance of Simeon was within the inheritance of the children of Judah."‡

3. Benjamin, on the north-east of Judah, having the Jordan for its boundary toward the rising sun, extended on the west as far as Kirjath-Jearim. On its southern border, this tribe possessed the city Jebus, at a later period the capital of the land, under the name of Jerusalem. The city Bethel, which fell to it by lot, but out of which it was unable to drive the Canaanites, was afterwards captured by Ephraim.

4. Dan, on the north-west of Judah, and the west of

\* Josh. xviii. 3.

† Josh. xviii. 9.

‡ Josh. xix. 1, seq.

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Benjamin, extended to the Mediterranean. At a later period, a colony of Danites seized the city of Laish, just under Hermon, and gave it their own appellation.

5. Ephraim stretched on the north of Benjamin, and Dan to beyond Mount Ebal, and from the Jordan to the ocean. The bones of Joseph, which Israel had brought out of Egypt, were interred at Shechem, in the parcel of ground of old purchased by Jacob.\*

6. The second or western half of Manasseh, lying on the north-west of Ephraim, had the Mediterranean for its boundary on the west, and possessed the sea-shore from the river Kanah to the city Dor. On the north, it touched on Asher, and had on the north and the north-east Issachar, and not the Jordan, as Josephus states.† Some towns in Issachar and Asher had been given to Manasseh, but Manasseh was unable to expel the Canaanite natives.

7. Issachar extended on the north-west of Manasseh, having the rivers Kishon and Jordan for its limits. On the west and south-west this tribe touched the territory of Manasseh, and on the north-west ran up as far as the promontory of Carmel.

8. Asher occupied the coast on the north-west of Issachar, from the south of Carmel to the neighbourhood of Sidon. Its cities, in number some twenty, were not very considerable; Achzib, (Ecdippa) Acco, and Sidon itself properly belonged to Asher, but they were never conquered.

9. Zebulon, on the north of Issachar, and having Asher on the west, reached on the east to the vicinity of Capernaum on the sea of Galilee.

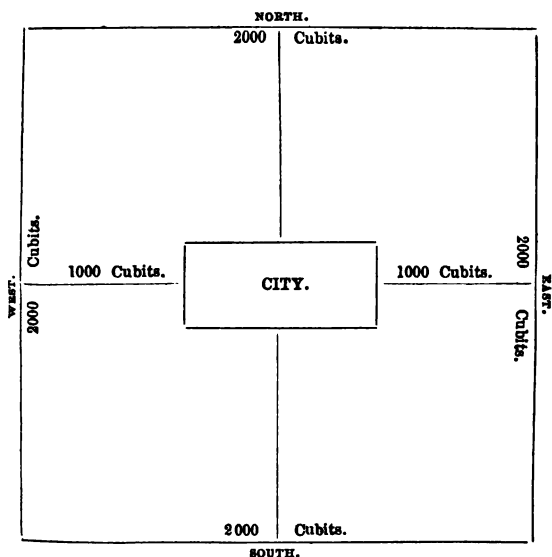
10. Naphtali ran from the northern boundary of Zebulon to the sources of the Jordan; on the west it bordered on Asher and Phœnicia, and in the east it had for limit the upper Jordan and the Lacus Samochonitis (Sea of Merom or El-Huleh).

After having made this general division, Joshua, with the aid of the high priest, Eleazar, assigned the Levitical cities with their suburbs. According to directions given by Moses,‡ each city was to stand in the centre of a parallelogram of 8000 cubits, or 4000 yards, as thus shown:—

\* Gen. xxxiii. 19; Josh. xxiv. 32.      † Josh. xvii. 10; Antiq. v. 1, 32.

‡ Numb. xxxv.

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In all, forty-eight cities, with such suburbs, were given to Levi. The priests who were of the family of Kohath received thirteen cities in the territories of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin; other descendants of Kohath had ten cities in the possessions of Dan and Manasseh (on the west of the Jordan). Thirteen cities were given to the Gershonites in Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh (on the east of the Jordan), and twelve cities were appropriated to the Merarites in Zebulon, Gad, and Reuben. Six of these were cities of refuge; already three cities of refuge had been appointed by Moses, and Joshua added other three in western Palestine.

The war having come to a termination, Joshua convoked the transjordanic Israelites, by whose aid the rest had been enabled to overcome the inhabitants; and having exhorted them to remain faithful to the law of Moses, gave them his blessing, and sent them to their own possessions. Arrived at the Jordan, those tribes raised on the borders of the river a great altar, intended as a memorial for posterity, in order that they might not be excluded from the Hebrew communion. The act was



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suspected of some idolatrous design. "The symbol of a foreign worship stands on the Jordan!" exclaimed pious Hebrews up and down the western coast. The exclamation was answered by another, "Down with the abomination! down with the abomination!" But zeal had outrun knowledge. Before arms were taken up for a fratricidal war, a deputation was sent to ask an explanation. The quality of the deputies argues the deep solicitude that prevailed, and gives a fine instance of the pious care then taken to preserve pure and intact the monotheism of the law. The deputies were Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the high priest, and ten princes or heads of tribes. These, the representatives of the western Israelites, reproached the easterns with unfaithfulness, who on their part protested their unwavering attachment to the common ancestral faith, and declared that the altar was merely an attestation of their Hebrew lineage. Phinehas and his associates expressed themselves satisfied, and returning home communicated news which was received with general joy. In conformity with its object the altar was designated *Ei* (witness) "for," said its builders, "it is a witness, between us that Jehovah is God." So far therefore was the structure from subserving any idolatrous purpose, that it stood there a testimony to the only true and living God, and a protest against the false divinities worshipped by the native population.\*

Joshua probably passed the remainder of his days at Shechem, and at Timnath-serah in Mount Ephraim, which had been given him as a reward of his distinguished services.† With a disinterestedness of which he had seen so fine an example in Moses, he surrendered all the civil power which must have ensued from the command of a large and victorious army, and left the internal government of the tribes to their natural heads and rulers, namely, the heads of houses and elders of the people. If we may judge from the brief narrative,‡ the conqueror of Canaan, now stricken in years, was permitted for some time to enjoy the pleasurable sight of the work he had accomplished without the noises of battle or the disturbances of collision. Becoming aware that his end was near, he left his solitude and prepared for one final effort on behalf of Israel and Israel's God. He summoned all the tribes at

\* Josh. xxii. 24; Josephus v. 1. 28.

† Josh. xix. 50; xxiv. 30.

‡ Josh. xxiii. 1.

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Shechem, "and called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers."\* In order to give the utmost solemnity to this great national convocation, the ark was conveyed thither from Shiloh.† Then Joshua delivered an address, in which he brought to remembrance the benefits and blessings which Jehovah had bestowed on Israel so abundantly; he exhorted the people to remain faithful in observing the law of Moses, urged them to prosecute hostilities against the Canaanites, foretold the sore evils which would ensue if they departed from the living God, and if they had intercourse with the remaining natives, who were yet numerous in the land. On their part, the Hebrews promised obedience, and solemnly ratified their covenant with Jehovah. To confirm that compact, and to preserve a knowledge of its substance, Joshua wrote an outline of its contents, and placed it among the national archives, "in the book of the law of God."‡ He also set up a monumental stone, saying unto all the people, "This stone shall be a witness unto you, lest you deny your God." This anxiety for the preservation of the religion of Jehovah was almost as necessary as laudable, for already the leaven of idolatry was working in the mass,§ while around the camp of Israel there was darkness which might be felt.

### DEATH OF JOSHUA.

Not long after these interesting yet mournful events, Joshua died, being a hundred and ten years old, and sixty-five years after the departure from Egypt. "And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-serah."|| During five and twenty years he had been at the head of the people of God.¶ Josephus describes his character in a few words: "He was a man that wanted not wisdom nor eloquence to declare his intentions to the people, but was very eminent in both qualities. He was of great courage and magnanimity in action and in danger, and very sagacious in procuring the peace of the people, and of great virtue at all proper seasons." His felt inferiority to Moses, both as a man and as a leader, is intimated in the quiet manner in which the sacred record mentions his death, and in the absence of pomp and display in

\* Josh. xxiv. 1.      + Josh. xxiv. 28.

: The record is probably found in the xxiii and xxiv of our Book of Joshua.

Josh. xxiv. 14—23.    || Josh. xxiv. 29—30.    ¶ Joseph. Antiq. v. 1, 29.

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the ceremonial of his interment. And yet, while Moses excelled in original and vigorous thought, as well as in heroic daring, Joshua was great alike in council and in act. If to Moses belongs the singular merit of imparting to Israel a system of law which has gone far to give law to the world, Joshua earned no ordinary praise by securing for the Mosaic constitution a "local habitation," and by so preparing it to become a living reality and a durable blessing in a free religious commonwealth. As a man of action, rather than of words, Joshua has left behind him nothing comparable with the grand utterances of Moses: yet the few words of his which find a place in Scripture show that he did not lack the true prophetic spirit. It is, however, as a warrior that Joshua demands the admiration of the world. The course of our narrative\* has abundantly shown that the duty he received of Moses to discharge was one of extraordinary difficulty. Whether we consider the nature of the land or the character and condition of the inhabitants; or whether, on the other side, we consider the Israelites in their recent history or in their actual state, we find abundant reason for declaring that the probabilities of success were very small, when Joshua, with his own generation, first set foot on the borders of Canaan. Nevertheless, in a few months, by the special aid of Divine Providence, the Hebrews occupied the whole of Perea, and in a few months more they had taken up a firm position on the west of the Jordan. Ere long their endeavours were crowned with complete success. The land of promise had become the land of inheritance.

### THE CANAANITISH WARS EXPLAINED AND VINDICATED.

That result, which was the basis of the Hebrew Commonwealth, and so the precursor of the Christian church with all its burden of interests, has been alike rashly condemned and unwisely defended. "The extermination of the Canaanites" even yet affords a pregnant theme for the small minds of a scepticism which is partly censorious and partly philosophical. Let it be said, as a preliminary, that the Canaanites were not exterminated. True, blood was shed—indeed so much blood was shed by the invading Hebrews as makes one's mind shudder in these days of mild Christian culture. Yet it is a

\* See particularly "The Spies."

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simple fact that such is the price at which have been purchased the chief blessings of civilization. We hate war, we hate war in the depth of our souls, but we hate something still more: with an unmitigated hatred do we hate idolatry, licentiousness, superstition, and despotism. These are the deep curses of our race. One of these curses alone will inflict more evils on a country in one generation than can arise from war in a century. Peace, without liberty, is more deadly to man than all the wars of freedom. Physical death is by no means the worst thing that can befall sire or son: the hugest evil is the death of the soul. And the soul was dead, when of old Bel and Moloch bore sway in Canaan. Nor would the foul spots of their criminality be washed out by aught else than blood. Races sometimes become so vile as to be fit only for destruction. If a land is overflowed with rottenness, there is no resource but the besom. Be grateful if a hand comes forth to sweep the corruption away without stint and without pity. Thereby a great service is done, for that particular land, as well as for human kind. Or does the objector wish that social corruptions should add heap to heap till the abominable nuisance breed a pestilence to ravage the whole civilized world? Thank God for such moral scavengers as Joshua and Cromwell?

The first count, then, in our reply to the sceptics is, that the Canaanites were ready for the sword and deserved no better fate than that which they underwent. And this plea, it will be seen, is put in such a shape as to meet the views of our adversaries. We do not now take up the matter on religious, but on social grounds. We abstain from speaking of the Canaanites as sinners before God, in order to show, with less drawback from prejudice, that they were an offence and a bane before men. We say that, could they have been spared by the law of God, the law of social and civil and individual life demanded their extirpation. And we add that the only thing to be deplored is, that the sword halted in its steps, and stopped short of its duty. That which the sword spared became a rock of offence to the Hebrews, and a stumbling-block to the civilised world. The short-comings of the sword in the conquest and re-settlement of the land, did nothing but produce sanguinary banquetings and full harvests of death during the period of the Judges and the Kings.

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Nor, when the matter is regarded in its religious aspect, is the plea invalidated in the slightest degree. For who will affirm that it is wrong for God to do in connection with religion that which it is customary for him to do in his providential dealings with the world at large? If effete races perish before the advances of young and vigorous races in Greece, in Italy, in England, why not in Canaan? If that removal is good, how can this removal be bad? If God works benevolently as well as wisely there, how else does he work here? You stumble not at history—why stand aghast at religion? The disappearance of the Indian tribes of North America many persons regard as alike natural and necessary—why then characterise the disappearance of the Canaanite class as cruel and wrong? An extermination on religious grounds is not on that account the less an extermination on social grounds; nor is it any objection to religious punishments that they have analogies and counterparts in the penal system of the whole of civilized existence. You must prove that the wars of religion called forth by Luther's reformatory efforts were blameable—that the Barons who withstood the imbecile and tyrannical John committed a great civil wrong—and that the English people deserved reprobation in driving from their land the sunken, infatuated, and arbitrary family of the Stuarts, before you can justifiably question the good bestowed by Jehovah on the world by investing Joshua with the authority and the power to sweep away the degenerate races of Canaan.

Nor does the objector gain anything for his cause by alleging that, in the case of Joshua, God's scourge was in the hands of human beings who would suffer injury to themselves in becoming the executors of God's vengeance. Here, too, the analogy with Providential dealings, and with the interests of civilization, is perfect. God's scourge is always in the hands of human beings. They were Greeks who fought God's battle at Marathon; they were Medes and Persians whom God led into the city of Babylon by the emptied channel of the Euphrates: in the same way, they were Hebrews who slew Og, king of Bashan, and Adoni-zedek, king of Jerusalem. Human was the hand that wielded the sword in these and a thousand other days of God's wrath. Nor was that hand of necessity injured thereby. It is not only sweet, but noble and

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ennobling, to die for either one's country or one's religion! A great cause makes the soul great! You speak of blood-defilements? You are afraid of blood-thirstiness? Possible, perhaps to some extent inevitable, evils. But, then, is unmingled good an earthly possession? If the Hebrews were taught to hate the idolatries of Canaan in the act of slaying its inhabitants, the lesson would be none the less impressive and lasting, because painful, severe, and costly. With those who hold that lustful idolatries are a slight evil, we care not to argue; but thoughtful students of history, and pure and high-minded men, will think that even harsh passions may be excused, if, like the hide of the rhinoceros, they effectually guard the soul from the poisoned arrows of vice and crime. Had we before us the task to construct out of our fancy the best possible of worlds, we might exclude hatred as well as lasciviousness: but we are dealing with realities, and the realities with which we deal have for their date some fourteen hundred years before the Christian era. And if it was morally, socially, or civilly wrong for Providence, under the title of Jehovah, to command and execute those penalties of which Joshua was the minister, then, for now more than three thousand years, has the unseen and irresistible hand that governs the world and directs society been inflicting the very same wrongs on the children of men. Nevertheless, civilization ever advances, and our human condition ever improves.

We must also urge on the attention of the reflecting that the land of Canaan was expressly and emphatically given by God to Abraham and his descendants. This plea the unbeliever will hesitate to admit; yet even he cannot deny that such a view of the matter is the Biblical view, and that the Biblical view was the view taken and held by Moses, Joshua, and the people of Israel. The view was either well-grounded or ill-grounded. If the former, Canaan belonged to Israel; for "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." If the right of property lies with the originator of property, the Creator of heaven and earth is the sole owner. As of the universe, so of Canaan. Being the sole (and in the full sense of the word) owner, the only proper owner of Canaan, God might bestow the right of possession on whom he chose. He bestowed it on the Abrahamidæ; and they, in consequence,

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were justified, nay required, to take such steps as would lead them into the possession of their own. If the view was ill-grounded, nevertheless the view was real, being entertained by the invading armies. Holding that view, they not only stood acquitted in the "court of conscience," but they were called on by their own convictions to assert their rights, and if those rights were gainsayed or withstood, to remove the opponents out of their path. But if the Hebrews believed that, in their invasion of Canaan, they were merely taking possession of their rightful property and long-withheld inheritance, then to them the act was not merely virtuous, but praiseworthy. By such an act, their souls might be ennobled and could not be injured; and so we are taught that God, in employing human beings to execute his judgments on the polluted race, sets a finishing hand to a moral and national training which he had commenced centuries before, when he called Abraham from Mesopotamia, and assured him that his seed, numerous as the stars of heaven, should inherit the land on which he stood, and in possessing that land should become a blessing to the whole of human kind.

Finally, the land thus given to Abraham, Abraham conquered from one extremity to the other. From Hebron to Dan and from Dan to Sodom was the patriarch's power felt and his authority acknowledged.\* Thus God's word became realised in fact. The fulfilment followed the promise. The right *de jure* was by that conquest converted into a right *in facto*; consequently, the occupation of Canaan by Joshua was simply a taking possession of ancestral property. It is true that the Hebrews had been compelled by famine to migrate into Egypt, but they never surrendered their inheritance. The right of gift remained the same, nor was the right of occupation forfeited by a temporary yielding to the pressure of necessity. In abeyance the right of occupation was; but rights in abeyance are merely rights whose assertion is postponed. The time came when the Israelites had the power, as they had long had the will, to claim and resume their own. The claim was successfully made; the resumption was complete. The same Providence, from whose mysterious behests came the famine which drove the Abrahamidæ from their homes, had in its gracious dealings produced such a social and civil juncture

\* Gen. xiv.

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ture, as both invited and enabled them to revive their claims, vindicate their rights, and re-occupy their inheritance. The possession thus acquired rested on a basis of right, equal and even superior, to any right of property presentable by ancient or modern nations.

In making this statement, we have left out of view the specific act of donation of the land by its only true Sovereign. To the Hebrews belonged the rights of conquest and the rights of possession. Theirs is only one out of a thousand instances in which the nobler blood masters the inferior, and either casts it out or reduces it to servitude. Reverse the law—say the lower gains the mastery over the higher, say the lower goes forward in its own manner to universal dominion—would the world be benefited? would the arts of peace be promoted? would human culture advance? The reverse would be the fact; instead of progress, retrocession would be the law of human life, and retrocession would proceed until man had fallen into a worse condition than that of the brutes.

But, besides the social and civil rights which are common to all the founders of empires and commonwealths, the invaders had the divine right which sprang from the gift and investiture made of God in their favour. If you affirm that this donation had no higher source than their own ideas, you do not deny its reality, nor make it a peculiar and exceptional thing. The leaders of other highly gifted nations have heard the low sounds of a divine call, and seen the pointing finger of a veiled Providence, in the power which stirred in their own bosoms, and the levelled and prepared road which opened before their feet. Columbus believed himself sent of God to discover and possess the western world. Here, then, Moses stands at least on the same platform with men to whose genius and enterprise the world owes immeasurable benefits. But the Biblical account has a right to be judged on its own averments. That account implicates a gift, an express donation. Attenuated to meet the unbeliever's condition, the right which arises hence is not inferior to the heaven-bestowed rights of others, who have led the vanguard of civilization. The same Divine voice which called the Pilgrim fathers to the eastern shores of the Atlantic, may well be recognised as speaking in Abraham's soul, bidding him leave Ur and make Mamre his



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home; and if that voice was believed to require the destruction of the Canaanites in order to the permanent consecration of the land to the service of Him by whom it was created and made so prolific and so beautiful, nothing more and nothing less was done than was done when the Christian immigrants of North America cleared for themselves a home, in spite of the opposition of the Indians, and there, in that disencumbered spot, erected to God a church, which in the spirit and power of true religion guaranteed civil liberty and secured indefinite social progress.

But this suppositious lowering of the rights of the Hebrew to the general level of ordinary history, by no means excludes the view of them given in the Bible. Valid thus far, they are valid also on a higher ground. The Christian, at least, may claim to be allowed his view as well as the sceptic. The Christian's view is the Biblical view. That view comprehends the bestowal of Canaan as a gift and an inheritance on Abraham and his descendants. The bestowal is expressly recorded and is the one underlying fact of the whole theocracy. Clearly it lay embedded in the deepest convictions of the people. There is no counter tradition. Neither patriotic free speaking, nor sectarian animosities, raise a question on the point. From the days of Abraham down to the present hour Israel has believed that, in virtue of a divine gift, Palestine is its own. This assurance gave birth to the terrible struggle which the nation carried on against the power of imperial Rome. This assurance called forth the energetic efforts to resume possession of the land in the reign of Adrian. This assurance has occasioned appeals to force, to fraud, to artifice and to stratagem—appeals of almost every kind—on the part of the Hebrew people, in order to gain back their beloved country; and in this assurance still the bulk of the nation lives scattered indeed over the whole globe, but with one heart beating toward the land of their fathers, and with eyes turned homewards, now with earnest longing, now with exultant hope, yet ever and anon with the hot tears of disappointment. Such an assurance must have a ground-work of reality. The reality is that gift, and that promise made of God to the patriarchs; and in that gift and that promise is the justification of Joshua's achievements.

## ALEXANDRIA:

IN ITS RELATIONS TO THE JEWS AND EARLY  
CHRISTIANITY.

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LET us imagine ourselves embarked in one of the fine old corn ships of the first century, on our way from the Great City on the banks of the Tiber to its rival on the banks of the Nile.

Thither our vessel is bound, to fetch a cargo of the staff of life for the multitudes that swarm the capital of the Cæsars. On and on we sail, over the blue waters of the Mediterranean ; and now that the sun has gone down,

and the night is getting dark, and thick clouds are drifting over the star-speckled sky, and only through rents in the black curtain can glimpses of their flickering radiance be caught; as we stand by the prow of our cumbersome bark, while the sighs of the wind amidst her rigging, and the dash of the waters against her well-timbered sides, and the splash of the long oars of her merry rowers, make melancholy music—how welcome is yonder flame-sign on the summit of the Pharos, telling us that there lies Alexandria, where our voyage ends !

And now it is a bright ruddy morning, and we are within the harbour. The passage into it is narrow and difficult ; for the coast is full of rocks, and they lie under water ; but, thanks to our Egyptian pilot, we escape all peril. And a fine harbour is this of Eanoetua, though not so large as the one on the

other side of that long causeway, which runs from the Island of the Pharos, and by a bridge connects itself with the city on the mainland. See, how ships of varied size and build, and boats that skim about like water-birds, are covering the whole basin with life ; while, every now and then, vessels glide under the great bridge into the other harbour, or come issuing from it by the same way, to mingle with the crowd of shipping through which we push our course to the quay of Cibotus.

But before we enter the city, let us visit the light-house. We are just under it—a large square structure of white marble, on the top of which fires are kept ever burning. It cost 800 talents.\* The architect was Sostratus, of Cnidus, a clever builder, as you see from his workmanship (which a sun-burnt old mariner informs us is called the wonder of the world); and a clever historian, too, of his own acts, as the same old man goes on to show. For look here—this inscription is cut in the solid marble: "Sostratus, the Cnidian, the son of Dexiphanes, to the Saviour Gods—for the sailors' benefit." "Now you must know," says our ancient weather-beaten friend, "that this Pharos was built by command of one of our great kings, Ptolemy Soter, and he ordered that his name should be engraved on the light-house. The architect obeyed the command; but, first of all, he cut his own name in the solid marble, as you see it, and then covered it over with clay, on which he wrote what the king required. The clay long since was worn off, and now you find the memorial in honour of the builder, instead of that in honour of the king." Pondering the moral wrapped up in that little story, we walk along the Heptastadium—for so the causeway of seven furlongs length is called—and enter the city.

What a city it is! Here is a long, broad street, running from north to south, connecting one end of this Egyptian metropolis with another. It is lined with buildings, many of magnificent architecture. Greek and Roman taste predominate, not without signs of Egyptian massiveness, with its strange and curious details. People of different races are passing up and down this spacious thoroughfare. Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Jews—these form the population of the city; but besides these, are men from many lands, east and west, drawn hither by many attractions, especially the gainfulness of

\* If Attic, £165,000; if Alexandrian, twice as much.

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Alexandrian commerce. The trade of Arabia and India comes up by the Red Sea, and then its treasures are shipped off to the ports of the Mediterranean. We have here glass houses, linen manufactories, and large establishments for making paper out of papyrus. The people are as busy as bees, but by no means so peaceable, for the most trifling matters will create a disturbance in Alexandria. A scarcity of meat or of vegetables is indeed a serious matter; but the killing of a cat, and a quarrel between a soldier and a citizen about a pair of shoes, surely require to be somewhat magnified by the imagination before such things can cause much excitement; yet, owing to nothing more in the first instance than matters of this kind, has Alexandria been thrown into a perfect furor.

Walking along the street, we come to a temple of exceeding grandeur. It is entered by a flight of a hundred steps, and forms a huge quadrangle lined by arcades. In the middle is the shrine of the god Serapis, with his coiled serpent, an emblem of eternity. This image by the heathen is esteemed the treasure of the city. Hear the story of its introduction to Alexandria. Once on a time, when Ptolemy the First was fortifying this city with walls, and adorning it with temples, a young man of matchless beauty appeared in a dream, and told the king to go to Pontus, and fetch thence a statue, which should be the palladium of the Empire; and then the young man vanished in a blaze of fire. The statue was of himself, and he was Serapis. Ptolemy at first did not obey, for he had other things to think of; but a repetition of the dream, accompanied by threatenings of evil if he did not attend to it, induced him to send and search after the image in Pontus. When it was found at Sinope, it was no easy thing to secure it, for the inhabitants were indisposed to part with what they counted so precious. But the god came to the help of Ptolemy; for appearing to the king of Pontus, he warned him of mischief if he did not comply. Whereupon, he assembled his people, and urged them to allow the idol to be removed, but without effect, for they surrounded their temple with a determination to resist all attempts to deprive them of their god. The god himself, says the legend, now proceeded to act on his own behalf, and walked off alone from the temple of Sinope, to the ship of the Alexandrian ambas-

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The inhabitants were divided into three classes ; the first class, Macedonians and Greeks ; the second, Alexander's mercenaries ; and the third, native Egyptians. Into the first class of citizens the Jews were admitted, and, at the same time, the full exercise of their religion was allowed. Thus the attraction of the children of Abraham towards Alexandria was very great ; for, before the city was founded, they had come to relax the observance of the laws which separated them from other nations ; their commercial habits and love of gain had increased : a more subtle idolatry than what their fathers had been addicted to now held possession of their hearts and to dwell in a metropolis which was the connecting link between the trade of the East and West, and there to obtain the first rank of citizenship, offered the most enviable opportunity for the acquisition of riches. So large was the influx of Jews to Alexandria, that they soon formed a considerable portion of the population. They had their synagogues and institutions, and, together with the rest of the Jews in Egypt, separated themselves from their brethren in Palestine, so far as to worship in a temple of their own. On or Heliopolis. They adopted the language of their country, which was Greek, and into it the Hebrew Scriptures were translated, for both public and private reading. This translation forms so important an event in the history of the Alexandrian Jews that we must here particularly advert to it.

Strange legends were long current as to its origin. In the first century of the Christian era, when Alexandria was in the manner we have just described, the manner of producing the translation was believed to have been very marvellous, and in the immediately succeeding the idea of its marvellousness received the most startling additions. The earliest particular account was, that Ptolemy Philadelphus, learning the Jews were in possession of a certain sacred book, called " the Law of Moses," gave orders that it should be sent for from Jerusalem, and interpreters to render it into Greek—that three nobles of the Egyptian court suggested, as a needful preliminary, that the king should emancipate certain Jews of Palestine whom he had made captives in war—that he did this at a vast expense and then wrote a letter to Eleazer, the high priest, requesting a true copy of the law, and with it six learned men out of

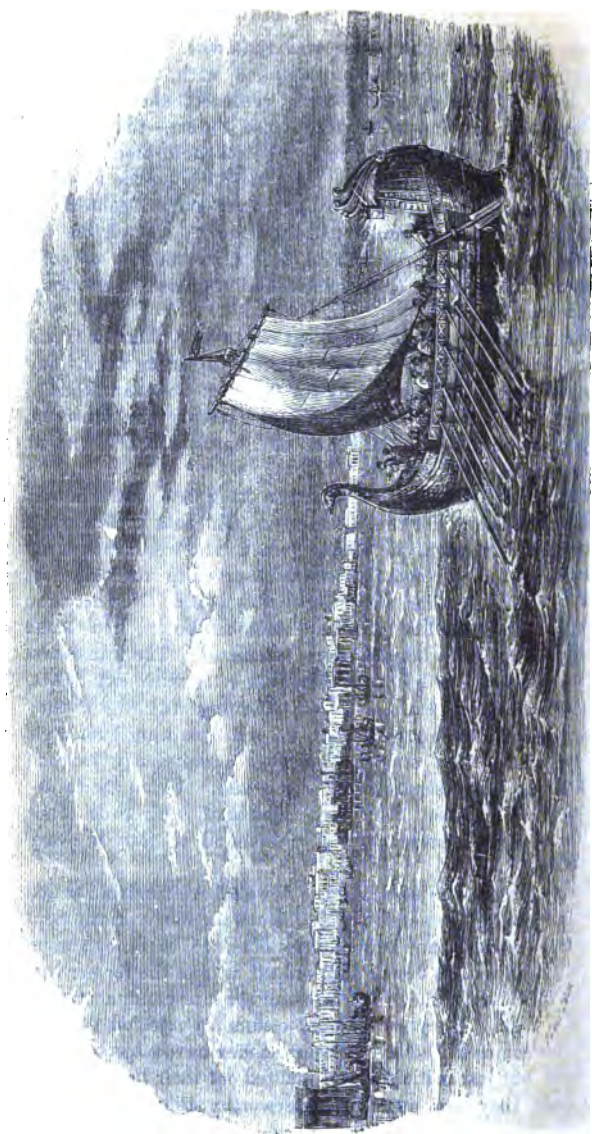
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twelve tribes—that the letter was sent with a large sum of money—that the request was complied with, and a copy of the Law, written in gold letters, returned, along with an embassy of seventy-two distinguished elders—that on their arrival at the court of Ptolemy, he was delighted at their wisdom, and assigned them a dwelling-place on the island of Pharos, where, in seventy-two days, after mutual conference and agreement, they completed their work; whereupon the king gave to each three rich garments, two talents of gold, and a cup of the same costly metal, and then sent them home with honour.

Another and later account went on to say, that the translators did not differ from each other in a single word, they being assisted in their work by the Spirit of God; and that in commemoration of the wonder, an anniversary was observed, when the Jews visited the island of Pharos, and there spent the day in festivity and joy.

A third legend reported that the king had little houses built on the island for the interpreters, and that each worked alone at his version, in which, when all were compared together, an exact resemblance was observed in the minutest respects. Yet another story ran to this effect. Not only the book of the law, but all the canonical books, and some apocryphal writings besides, were translated. The translators were shut up in the island in thirty-six cells, with sky-lights, two translators in each cell, from morning till night, they being conveyed in thirty-six boats to and from king Ptolemy's palace, where they supped and were sumptuously lodged; each couple being separated from the rest. When the translations were finished, they were compared with each other in the monarch's presence, and were found to tally in every particular.

Such were the stories which the Jews of Alexandria handed down respecting the version which bears the name of the Septuagint, or seventy, and these stories obtained currency among Christians as well as Jews; and, indeed, it is to the former that we are indebted for the preservation of the latest and most wonderful of them. They are now as commonly rejected as they were once commonly believed. Learned men have subjected them to severe but just criticism, and pointed out their incredibility. No doubt they are utterly untrustworthy, though they may



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have some base-work of truth under an accumulation of fables. That the translation of the books of Moses into Greek might be encouraged by Ptolemy is not an unlikely thing of itself, and that some correspondence with the Jews of Jerusalem might be held in connection with such an undertaking is not improbable; but it seems most reasonable to conclude that the translation, so much needed by the Grecianized Jews of Alexandria, would be procured by themselves for their own use, rather than by the monarch of Egypt. At first, the Law only was translated, as the earliest legends state; other books were included probably by degrees. The Septuagint, as we have it, bears internal evidence of having been produced by several distinct individuals, qualified for their task in very various degrees.

In the reign of Ptolemy Philopater, it is said, the Jews of Alexandria were fearfully oppressed. Their brethren in Jerusalem had resisted the attempt of that monarch to enter the temple in their holy city, for which he revenged himself on that portion of the Hebrew race who were residing in the capital of Egypt. According to the romantic story in the third book of Maccabees, the king, on his return from Palestine, published a decree, forbidding those who would not worship the gods to enter his palace. He is further represented as degrading the Israelitish inhabitants from their rank as first-class citizens, and placing them among the lowest Egyptian people. They were to be branded by hot irons, with the mark of an ivy leaf—a symbol of the god Bacchus. Resistance was to be punished with slavery or death. Exemption from degradation was promised to those who would renounce their religion—a favour which on such terms only 300 were found to accept. These were treated by their brethren as apostates, which enraged the monarch all the more, and he proceeded to gather as many of the Jews in Egypt as he could into the great Hippodrome of the city, and to let loose upon them 600 elephants. The animals, however, refused to destroy the people of God, and turned to vent their rage on the persecutors, in consequence of which Philopater desisted from his cruel purposes, and rescinded his decrees. The third book of Maccabees is not an authentic history. No dependence can be placed on it. This account of the persecution is unsupported by other authorities, and whatever particles of truth it



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may contain, must be left as a whole in that huge collection of legendary lore which has come down from antiquity, defying all attempts to separate what there may probably be in it of history from the immense amount it certainly contains of fable.

The case is different, however, with the account of a persecution we have of the Alexandrian Jews in the year A.D. 39. The substantial truth of it is not questioned. It would appear that the sons of Israel were much disliked by the other inhabitants of the city. There had never been a thorough amalgamation. Differences of race, of habits, of customs, and especially of religion, had created and perpetuated insurmountable barriers of distinction. However rich and prosperous, the Jew of Alexandria, like the Jew in other cities of less ancient times, was an object of detestation—a by-word and a reproach.

So notorious was this antipathy, that when Alexandria had become subjected to Rome, and Avillius Flaccus was governor, to ingratiate himself with the Greek and Egyptian people, he withdrew all favour and even protection from the Jews, and surrendered them to the tender mercies of their spiteful neighbours. They had already incensed the Roman emperor by refusing to admit his image into the synagogue—a circumstance which strengthened Flaccus in his purpose. The Alexandrians, seeing they might with impunity insult and vex the Jews, took opportunities of doing so; the flame of hatred and vengeance spread, and throughout Egypt a large number of oratories and synagogues were burnt and destroyed, or profaned by the erection of the imperial image. The rights of citizenship were formally withdrawn from the devoted race, and Alexandria was thrown into a state of confusion and warfare. The Jews were very numerous, occupying two out of the five quarters of the city, and probably did not, without resistance, submit to their enemies. Crushed into one district, deprived of their property, their shops and houses pillaged, themselves cast into the streets without provisions, they suffered intensely, and many died of want. Stray wanderers about the city were seized, and tortured, and killed; and when a Jewish sail entered the harbour, the mob of Alexandria was presently out to seize the cargo and burn the vessel.

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Herod Agrippa, who was on a visit to Alexandria, witnessed these excesses, and was indeed himself exposed to insult. He wrote to the Emperor, who recalled Flaccus, and mitigated the persecution. Delegates went to Rome to represent the Jews and the rest of the citizens. Philo headed the one deputation, and Apion the other. It was said against the Jews, that they refused to swear by the Emperor, and to honour his image. Caligula is reported to have declared, after hearing the Jews' defence, "They are not so wicked as they are ignorant and unhappy in not believing me to be a god." But the deputies obtained no settlement of the matter. The animosity and conflict continued. On the accession of Claudius, the Jews resolutely took up arms. Alexandria was in a state of civil war. Things came to extremities; and at length, to restore peace, it was necessary to replace the Jews in the possession of their ancient privileges. Still, however, the fire smouldered; it was not extinguished. The revolt of the Jews in Palestine fanned the embers; the flame broke out again. The Alexandrian Greek massacred the Alexandrian Jew. The latter took terrible reprisals. A mob was made by a body of Israelites, with lighted torches, on the Amphitheatre, to burn it when filled with people. An army of soldiers attacked the Jewish population at large, when fifty thousand are said to have been slain. After the fall of Jerusalem, fugitive Jews of the most fanatical order sought to stir up their Alexandrian brethren to fresh revolt; but unsuccessfully. Some of the fanatics were seized by the Romans, while others fled to the Thebaid, whither they were pursued. Many were tortured and put to death. Vespasian then ordered the destruction of the temple at On. At first it was only shut up; but afterwards it was stripped and for ever disused.

### III.—THE PHILOSOPHIZING TENDENCIES OF THE ALEXANDRIAN JEWS.

The Jews of Palestine were not literary; but some of those who lived in Alexandria caught the spirit of the place, and devoted themselves to erudite pursuits. The museum opened its doors, and the library its treasures, to all who thirsted for knowledge and delighted in intellectual occupation. Children of Abraham might be seen in the porticoes

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discussing with Greeks and Romans and Orientals abstruse questions in philosophy; or busy with the works of Plato and Aristotle, comparing the speculations of those gifted sages of Greece with the more precious writings of their own inspired historians, prophets, and poets.

The Septuagint and some volumes of classic literature lay side by side, the turbaned head bent thoughtfully over both; the keen eye was fixed on the papyrus or the parchment, and ideas new and old rose in the brain, to become sometimes terribly and disastrously confused. Our Jewish men of literature, smitten with the charms of Greek philosophy and Greek verse, and also retaining a reverence for their own Scriptures, sought to harmonize them into one system of theological philosophy. Of course, real truth, wherever found, is in perfect accordance with Divine revelation; but men of enlarged knowledge, with a love of systematizing, as well as a veneration for the Word of God, are apt to fancy connections between the thoughts of genius and the oracles of inspiration, where they do not exist; and to misinterpret both from an honest desire or a proud ambition to enter the depths, and bring out the fulness of each. The Jews of Alexandria fell into this danger; they proceeded first to assume that all which was true in Greek philosophy had been borrowed from their own divine writings; and then, by an allegorical method of interpretation, they sought to bring out from Scripture, meanings which should harmonize with the admired instructions of Greek wisdom. The writings of the Greeks as well as the Hebrews were twisted and squeezed in the course of this process of combination; but, worse still than this, references were made to passages as found in classical authors, which really did not exist in any of their writings, and works perfectly suppositious were used as authentic.

It is to be feared that a good deal of literary forgery must be charged to the Alexandrian Jews. Sometimes this kind of forgery lost sight of the object of harmonizing Scripture with classical literature; and, through the desire of exalting their country, and adding fresh glory to the most illustrious period in its annals, a direct discrepancy was produced; for in the verses of the Sybil, which are supposed to be of Alexandrian Jewish invention, the empire of Solomon is said to have extended over Asia Minor, the Islands of the Sea, and

the regions of Persia, contrary to the statement in the book of Kings, that it was bounded by the river of Egypt and the Euphrates. Injudicious attempts at philosophizing, a blind desire to exalt the Scriptures, a national vanity, and a longing for literary distinction, led them on, step by step, till they descended to what was fraudulent and false. They taught by their example a lesson of warning, which was little heeded by those who followed them—a lesson of warning worthy of being studied now—a lesson which says to us: “Be perfectly honest in all your studies; make the love of truth your first principle. Do not think that God’s Word can be honoured by any of your clever schemes of interpretation, which have only their ingenuity to recommend them. Be not over-hasty in seizing on coincidences between the religious teaching of the Bible and human systems of philosophy. Above all, shun everything that is fictitious and fraudulent, however speciously it may cover itself under a pious motive. God’s truth will take care of itself, and will ever frown on all your lies pretended to be for its service.”

Philo, whom we have already named in connection with the deputation to Rome, after the oppressions of Flaccus, was the most distinguished of the Jewish literati of Alexandria. We do not charge him with any literary forgeries; but he was deeply imbued with the speculative spirit of his age; over-anxious to make the Bible and Greek authors agree; intent on giving a philosophical appearance to his religion; and prone to wrest and torture the signification of Scripture, through his inveterate habit of allegorizing.

In a brief sketch like this, anything like a complete statement of the opinions of this remarkable man must not be expected. Indeed, if we had space, and were fully acquainted with his writings, it would appear from the researches of the most learned critics into the works of Philo, that to present a consistent account of them is impossible, and to render them thoroughly intelligible to common readers extremely difficult. He seems to have been a man of large reading and active mind, but not distinguished by creative power, or even accurate habits of thought. Plato was his great master, but not to the exclusion of deference for the oracles of the Peripatetic and Stoic schools. In addition, he largely infused orientalism into his scheme of philosophy, and then attempted to make

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all this, and the teachings of Moses and the prophets, square together. While upholding the personality of God, mysticism led him to speak very often of the unknowable and the nameless—the one and the all. He frequently used the title “Word of God,” but not always in the same sense; sometimes indicating what is only ideal and abstract, at other times applying it in a way to suggest a distinct personality. The world he also sometimes invested with personal attributes, calling it “the many-named Archangel,” “the first-born son of God.” He divided the energies or angels of God into classes, and adopted a theory of emanative creation; the light of Divine power beaming out and filling concentric circles, the nearest to himself most intensely glorious—the remote pale and faint. Matter was with him, as with the orientals generally, the seat of evil—an imperfect confused substance, if a substance at all. Indeed, he spoke of it at times as really non-existent, as merely potential. He removed God from all contact with matter, leaving it in the outermost circle of existence, furthest from the radiance of Divine glory. The morals of Philo were essentially ascetic. He praised a life of contemplation and abstinence, insisted on the mortification of the body, and enjoined a stoical endurance of evil.

These imperfect hints as to a large philosophical system may serve at least to show what a strangely transformed thing the theology of a Jew looks, when it has passed through a philosophical process, and become mixed up with the imaginations and reveries of speculative minds. Yet Philo did not consider himself the less a Jew by turning Greek philosopher. He was preparing for later developments of the same order. He is only a representative instance of mental habits prevalent in all ages. This fondness for a grand philosophy of religion—this searching after explanations of everything existent—this eagerness to blend together the divinely revealed with the human known, or the humanly imagined—this craving after a rounded system of truth—this blending of mysticism with the inductions of reason—is natural to some minds. The tendency cannot be crushed, but it may be curbed and guided. It may be disciplined and chastened. It may be set free from all dishonesty and prejudice. It may blend with the pure love of truth. It may be subjected loyally to the king-  
dom of Divine revelation. It may work meekly and

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patiently by the light of the heavenly word, unallured by the *ignis fatuus* of human dreams. It may go up to the proper limit, and then stop. It may end its inquiries by contented silence and adoring wonder on the shores of the unknown. This is possible, but not easy. Philo had not learned to do it.

#### IV.—INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY—CLEMENT AND ORIGEN—PICTURE OF AN ALEXANDRIAN CHRISTIAN.

Before the conclusion of the first century, there was introduced to Alexandria that which was mightier than all its power, fairer than all its beauty, richer than all its wealth, wiser than all its wisdom—the gospel of Jesus Christ. From the importance of the city, and the intercourse between it and the rest of the world, especially between the Jews of Egypt and of Palestine, Christianity, as soon as it was published, would be likely to be conveyed to the people of Alexandria. No doubt, from what we know of primitive times, the truths of salvation would, in the first instance, be proclaimed to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, so numerous within the precincts of this populous capital. No authentic accounts of the time and manner of the introduction there of the Christian faith have been preserved; but tradition states that Mark, the Evangelist, was the person who first proclaimed in the place the name of Jesus. It is said, that for twelve years he laboured among the Alexandrians, and gathered a church from both Jews and heathens. We are further told that the Pagans, annoyed at his miracles, ascribed them to magic, and at a feast of their god Serapis, rushed on him while he was engaged in worship, and dragged him through the streets, and among stones and rocks cruelly mangled his body till life was extinct. A dreadful tempest is reported to have overtaken the persecutors, dispersing and destroying them. It is further related, in an old legend, that Mark, as he was walking through Alexandria, saw a poor cobbler who had cut his hand with an awl, so as to be unable to earn his bread. The Evangelist healed the wound, converted the cobbler, instructed him in Christianity, prepared him to be a minister, and left him his successor in the pastorate of the Alexandrian flock.

In the absence of veritable history, we have introduced these traditional anecdotes, which after all may not be utterly

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destitute of foundation, and may be taken as specimens of the sort of detail with which a curious and uncritical posterity endeavoured to fill up the blanks in early church annals. Most likely persecution assailed the preachers of the cross in Alexandria, as elsewhere, for there was a large number of idle, dissolute, cruel, and bigoted Pagans in the city, to say nothing of prejudiced Jews, and of philosophers, who, in spite of the liberality of their speculations, could be very intolerant. Nor can it be questioned that many of the early Alexandrian Christians would be of the class to which such a man as Mark's converted cobbler belonged.

In the second century, a strange letter was written by the Emperor Adrian relative to Alexandria, in which he says, with the utmost confusion and inconsistency: "I have found Egypt in every quarter fickle and inconstant; the worshippers of Serapis are Christians, and those are devoted to Serapis who call themselves Christian Bishops. There is no ruler of the synagogue, no Samaritan, no presbyter of the Christians, no mathematician, no soothsayer, no anointed; even the Patriarch himself, should he come into Egypt, is compelled by some to worship Serapis, by others Christ—a most seditious and turbulent sort of men. However, the city is rich and populous. They have one God: him the Christians, him the Jews, him all the gentile people, worship."

This eccentric letter proves, no doubt, "that within a hundred years from the resurrection of Christ, his worshippers formed at least an important part of the inhabitants of the second city of the empire; and perhaps it is not unfair from this record to conclude that they were as numerous as those who remained attached to the indigenous superstitions." But the communication also indicates the confusion of the citizens, and perhaps points to a truth, however painful it may be to admit it, in the insinuation of inconsistency on the part of Christians as well as of heathens, and in the satirical hint that too many in common worshipped one God, the nature of whose divinity may be guessed with ease.

Christianity in Alexandria became connected with philosophy during the second century. This was to be expected, when a man of philosophical tastes, habits, and acquirements devoted himself to the study and exposition of Christian doctrines. It was natural that the preceding round of his

inquiries, and the accumulated knowledge reaped from reading, should be associated with the new and blessed instructions derived from the gospel. In the way of contrast, resemblance, proof, or illustration, as the case might be, much of his previous acquisitions would be available for Christian purposes. But of course there was danger of misusing philosophy in connection with religion—danger of confounding philosophy and revelation—of putting philosophy in the place of revelation—of corrupting by philosophy the teaching of revelation. Such Alexandrian Christians as frequented the Museum, and delighted in the treasures of the library, and admired Plato, and were fascinated with Homer, and read Philo, and through the medium of his comments looked at the Old Testament, were eminently exposed to the danger. They by no means altogether escaped injury from it.

Clement was a Presbyter of the Church of Alexandria, and afterwards master of the Christian catechetical school. He flourished in the reigns of Severus and Caracalla, between A.D. 192 and 217. We know next to nothing of the incidents of his personal history; but of the mode in which he exhibited Christianity, and sought to mould the character of the Christians of Alexandria, we are well informed in his extensive writings. As a philosopher of Christianity, he comes chronologically after Justin Martyr; in the measure of his philosophical knowledge and the influence it had on his opinions, he stands before him. This is not the place to go largely into the subject, but it will be pertinent as well as interesting to supply some little information respecting it.

Clement was a great allegorizer of Scripture, after the Jewish Philo, and in one characteristic comment, following that master, he compared Hagar to philosophy, and Sarah to virtue; and he said, in the same way as the one was second to the other, so profane wisdom ought to be subject to sacred truth; but as Abraham lived a good while with Sarah without issue, so the Christian, however he may cherish only divine wisdom, will not produce abundant fruit. As Abraham with Sarah's consent united himself to Hagar, so must Christian faith be married to philosophy.

While this odd exposition illustrates his allegorical habits of teaching, it also shows the undue place which he assigned to



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human wisdom. Perhaps he accommodated philosophy to his religion, more than religion to his philosophy. We do not think that his philosophy greatly affected the substance of his theological opinions. He held the principal truths of the gospel ; but he was fond of speculation ; he gave undue prominence to knowledge as an element of religion ; he was mystical in his views ; he threw some Scripture principles too much into the back-ground ; he dwelt upon what is obscure, trivial, or useless ; he divided Christians into two classes—believers and Gnostics—the men of faith and the men of knowledge ; he encouraged the idea of an outer teaching for the commonalty of Christendom, and an inner and secret teaching for the initiated : he thus sanctioned the doctrine of reserve, and broke in two the proper unity of the Church. Worst of all, he laid down, in morals, maxims of most pernicious application, going so far as to suggest excuses for deceit under certain circumstances, and thus to pave the way for modern Jesuitism.

Still, Clement must be distinguished from certain philosophers who flourished about this same time, and who are generally described as forming the philosophical school of Alexandria. That school existed from the end of the second to the midst of the fifth century. It gave a momentary lustre to Paganism under Julian ; but it was totally defeated and overthrown in the time of Theodorus and Justinian. Plotinus was an illustrious teacher, indeed the founder of that school ; and as a metaphysician and mystic, he was a remarkable precursor of those German thinkers whose works are now so largely imbuing the minds of many of our countrymen. Plotinus dogmatised on the absolute—identified subject and object—insisted on mysterious intuitions of truth—represented the finite as if becoming infinite—talked of the universal soul, and plunged into the darkness and contradiction of Pantheism.

A curious phenomenon is it in these days of boasted wisdom, to see men who pride themselves on having outgrown the forms of thought in the Hebrew Bible and the Greek Testament, dressing themselves up in the "old clothes" that were so fashionable in Alexandria seventeen hundred years ago. It is instructive to advert to ancient phases of opinion, when we find them revived in modern times, to discover that

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what some fancy to be original truth, is exploded error, and to ascertain the impotency of the attempts now being made to undermine Christianity from the notice of the perfect failure of such attempts in bygone ages. Plotinus did what some are doing now, and with the same view. It will assuredly turn out to be with the same result.

Plotinus and Clement were in religion wide as the poles asunder, whatever they might have in common as mystical thinkers; just as Coleridge and Emerson stand far apart in faith, whatever resemblances there may be in some points of their philosophy. No comparison can there be between the abstract Deity of Plotinus and the personal God of Clement—the Alexandrian Trinity of Unity, intelligence, and life, and the Christian Unity of Father, Son, and Spirit—the intuition of the soul, and the revelation of the Bible—the merit of human virtue, and salvation by the grace of God. The catechetical school of Clement and the philosophical school of Plotinus were in direct antagonism; the one was formed to make and keep men Christians, and the other to prevent or change them from being Christians.

Clement's writings give us many singular insights into Alexandrian life. He takes us into the banquetting-room. We see the guests crowned with garlands and anointed with perfumes. They dye their hair; and the old studiously endeavour to conceal their wrinkles, that they may look young. They are gaily attired, having made abundant use of their mirrors before they left home. Sitting down to table, delicacies most prized by the gourmands of the day are set before them. Eagerly do they scrutinize the dishes, and then speedily empty them; some, by eating or drinking too quickly, soil their beards, their hands, and their couches. They take wine out of costly cups, and the pipe and the flute are heard in their feasts. There is frivolous conversation, and more abundant laughter than is wise. Jestings and scurrility are not unknown.

He takes us into the streets. Here are women with purple veils, and slippers of gold and precious stones. Rebuked for their love of display, they answer:—"Why should we not use what God has given? Why not enjoy what we have? For whom were precious stones meant, if not for us?" Some are on their way to the baths—men and women!

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Alexandrians not being renowned for delicacy ; or they are going to the theatre, or the circus, or some other place of entertainment.

But these people are surely not the Christians of Alexandria ! Many of them, one would hope, do not profess to be such : but still, from what the good father says, there is too much reason to conclude that some who have assumed that holy name are pretty much as worldly, and thoughtless, and foolish, as others. At any rate, there can be no mistake as to persons meant when he describes those who change their appearance and behaviour according to the place they are in—like polypi on the rock—who are grave enough in church, but when they get out and mix with the crowd are like the rest. Having waited on God in his house, there they leave him, and away they go to their fladdling, and their love ditties, their stage-plays, and what not.

Clement gives us, also, a picture of his model Christian—such an one as we may fancy had attended his catechetical classes, and had come to be one of the most eminent of the Alexandrian congregations. Behold him ! He is plain in his habits—indeed, very abstemious ; he eats fish rather than flesh, has one meal a day, or at most two ; if he takes breakfast, it is off dry bread, without drinking. His dress is not costly—it is of cloth which has not passed the hand of the fuller ; strong, but not fine. It is generally white. He wears a ring only on his little finger, and the device is a dove, or a fish, or a ship, or a lyre, or an anchor—all emblems of his holy faith. His hair is thin, and his beard thick ; he never stains either, and never puts on a wig. Garlands, flowers, perfumes, he eschews, as well as luxury in furniture and utensils ; also the use of musical instruments and profane songs. He is a man of activity ; wrestles, plays at ball, walks, digs, draws water, chops wood, dresses himself, puts on his own shoes, washes his own feet, in short, is a thoroughly independent and self-helpful man. He sleeps in a bed neither adorned nor very soft. He rises in the night to pray ; he gets up early and reads.

The woman is also moderate in all things. Her adorning is not the plaiting of the hair and the putting on of apparel. She does not use dyes or ointments ; wears no flowers, no robe of purple, no slippers of rich embroidery, no chains of gold.

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She performs domestic duties ; spins, bakes, cooks, and makes the beds. She is particular in all her actions, and even in her gestures, looks, gait, tone of voice, in order to avoid scandal.

These portraits are taken from the very particular and minute directions which Clement gives respecting Christian conduct. His teaching is very different in its method from that of the New Testament, which descends into no trivial details, but lays down broad principles of perfect morality. Under the outer forms of Christian life, presented by Clement, we find in his writings much which constitutes the essence of Christianity. The knowledge, love, service, and imitation of the Lord Jesus Christ, are recognised as the foundation of Christian character. The Christian is a man of faith, prayer, charity, and holiness. His sins are forgiven through the Redeemer. He is instructed and illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

The Christians of Alexandria were taught by Clement, not only to subdue their passions, but to aim at a state of stoicism—an indifference to all outward objects—a condition of apathy, having neither sorrow nor joy, affection nor anger, for anything in the world. By means of this sort of freedom from what is outward and material, the soul was urged to aspire after the intuitive vision of the Eternal and Divine. Clement's perfect Christian is both ascetic and mystic, and there we have the germs of what is so fully developed afterwards in the history of Christendom. Still asceticism in Alexandria was not so strongly enforced as it was in Rome and Carthage. In point of asceticism, Tertullian and Cyprian were far in advance of Clement.

Origen, who became a teacher of the catechumens at the age of eighteen (A.D. 203), was a great light in the church of Alexandria. He went beyond Clement in speculation, exceeded him in allegorical extravagance, was very acute and profound, wayward in many of his fancies, and mistaken in many of his judgments ; but he was a great and a good man, a most laborious minister, and a most diligent Biblical critic, as his Homilies and his Hexapla fully witness. He was more of an ascetic than Clement, and, no doubt, under him asceticism grew in Alexandria. He quitted his profession as a grammarian, sold his books, lived on five-pence a day, slept on the bare ground, spent much of the night in st

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Scriptures by heart, went barefoot in winter, and wore only one garment. He was most zealous in converting the Alexandrians to Christianity, which brought on him the persecutions of the heathen portion of the city. They lay in wait for him, stoned him, and sent soldiers to murder him, so "that Alexandria seemed not large enough to conceal him." He was several times seized, dragged through the city, and put to the rack. One day the heathen shaved him, like their own priests, and led him up the steps of the Serapion, and gave him palm branches to distribute in honour of their favourite idol god. "Receive these palms," said he to the multitude with a loud voice, "not as belonging to Serapis, but to Christ."

He preached on Fridays and Sundays; and from his homilies we gather that many people came to church only on festivals, and then not so much for instruction as amusement. Some went away before the sermon was finished; some sat up in one corner and paid no attention. Some asked questions when the service was over; and others went away silent and unconcerned. He complained of the worldliness of Christians, and rebuked them for not studying the Scriptures so much as human literature; for spending money freely on masters, and books, and travelling, and grudging it for sacred instruction and improvement.

Origen lived in days of persecution. His father had died a martyr. He had written to his father, begging him not to save his life by apostacy for the sake of his family. He longed for the crown of martyrdom himself. But that his mother hid his clothes, he would, as a boy, have left home and rushed into the lions' den.

### V.—PERSECUTIONS OF CHRISTIANS BY THE HEATHEN.

Alexandria suffered from the persecution by Decius, A.D. 249. Dionysius was Bishop at the time, and became an object of popular rage. He concealed himself, and was searched for in the roads, by the rivers, and about the fields. He escaped, but was afterwards seized on his bed, and carried off upon an unsaddled ass. He gives us an account of the sufferings endured by the faithful in Alexandria. An aged man of the name of Metra was beaten with clubs, pricked in the face, and then dragged out of the city into the suburbs, and there stoned to

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death. A woman, called Quinta, was tied by the feet and dragged through the streets, and then shared the fate of Metra. The populace rushed on the houses of the Christians, plundered them of their contents, burnt the commoner part of the furniture, and appropriated the rest to themselves. There was no road or lane where the followers of Christ could walk in safety. They were everywhere met by violent abuse and execration, and threatened with death. Serapion was tortured, his limbs were broken, and he was then thrown out of an upper window in his house. Apollonia, an aged virgin, had her jaws beaten and her teeth knocked out. Then a fire was kindled, in which her tormentors declared they would burn her, if she did not utter certain impious expressions which they dictated. She refused, but at first shrunk from fire; then boldly sprang into it, and was consumed. Such is the short account given by Dionysius, and it is curious to compare with it the following legend of a later age.

"There dwelt in the city of Alexandria a magistrate who had great riches; but he, and his wife also, were heathens. They had no children, and day and night they besought their false gods to grant them a son or a daughter, to inherit their wealth. Meantime, for so it pleased God, three pious pilgrims, servants of the Lord, arrived in the city; and being hungry and weary, they begged an alms for the love of the Redeemer and the Blessed Virgin, his mother. Now, as they were thus begging opposite to the house of the magistrate, his wife, being astonished, called to them, and said, 'What new manner of begging is this? In whose name do ye ask alms?' Then the pilgrims preached to her the merits of Christ and of the Virgin. The woman, being greatly moved by their words, asked whether it were possible that the Virgin mother of God, of whom they spoke, could grant her prayer to have a child? And they answered, 'Without doubt.' Thereupon she called them in, and gave them alms, and meat and drink; and addressed her prayer, full of faith, to the Holy Virgin. Her prayer was heard, and she brought forth a daughter, to whom she gave the name of Apollonia.

"As the maiden grew up and flourished as a flower in grace and beauty, her mother ceased not to relate to her the wonderful circumstances of her birth; and thus she became

a true Christian at heart, and with a longing wish to be baptized. With this purpose, and directed by an angel, she found her way to St. Leonine, the disciple of St. Anthony, and desired to be made a Christian ; so he baptized her, and suddenly there appeared an angel holding a garment of dazzling white, which he threw over the maiden, saying, 'This is Apollonia, the servant of Jesus ! Go now to Alexandria, and preach the faith of Christ.' She, hearing the divine voice, obeyed, and preached to the people with wondrous eloquence. Many were converted ; others ran to complain to her father, and to accuse her of breaking the law ; but she defended herself ; and her father, incensed, gave her up to the power of the heathen governor, who commanded her instantly to fall down and worship the idol set up in the city. Then St. Apollonia, being brought before the idol, made the sign of the cross, and commanded the demon who dwelt within it to depart ; and the demon, uttering a loud cry, broke the statue and fled, shrieking out, 'The Holy Virgin Apollonia drives me forth !' The tyrant, seeing this, ordered her to be bound to a column, and all her beautiful teeth were pulled out, one by one, with a pair of pincers ; then a fire was kindled, and, as she persisted in the faith, she was flung into it, and gave up her soul to God ; being carried into heaven by his angels."

The bishop Dionysius also tells us of Julian, a man who had the gout, and of two others, who were carried on camels through the city, and scourged, and then burnt at the stake amidst crowds of spectators. Others, too, were tortured and killed, whose names are not recorded. One Dioseorus, a youth of fifteen, was delivered up, but escaped through the compassion which his age excited in the judge, and the admiration inspired by his early wisdom and eloquence.

Thanks to the letters of Dionysius, we can form a picture of his examination, and hear what passed between him and his judges. He is taken to the Hall of Judgment, and is arraigned before the Roman prefect *Emilius*. The presbyter Maximus, the deacons Faustus, Eusebius, and Chæremon, with a visitor from Rome, attend the Bishop.

*Emilius*.—"I have even personally reasoned with you on the clemency of our sovereigns, which you have also

experienced. For they have given you the chance of saving yourselves, if you are disposed to turn to the course of nature, and worship the gods that have preserved them in their government, and to forget those practices which are so unnatural. What, then, say ye to these things? For neither do I expect that you will be ungrateful for their kindness, since they would dispose you to a better cause."

*Dionysius*.—"All the gods are not worshipped by all; but each worships those whom he thinks to be gods. We, therefore, worship the one God and Creator of all things, and the very same that has committed the government to their most excellent and sacred majesties, Valerian and Gallierius. Him we worship and adore, and to him we incessantly pray that their reign may continue firm and unshaken."

*Emilianus*.—"But who prevents you from worshipping this one God—if he be a God—together with those that are natural gods? For you are commanded to worship the gods, and those gods which all know to be such."

*Dionysius*.—"We worship no other one."

*Emilianus*.—"I perceive that you are, at the same time, ungrateful and insensible to the clemency of our Cæsars. Therefore, you shall not remain in this city, but you shall be sent to the parts of Lybia, to a place called Cephro. For this place I have selected according to the orders of our Cæsars. But neither you, nor any others, shall in anywise be permitted, either to hold conventions, or to enter what you call your cemeteries. But if any one appear not to have gone to the place I have commanded, or if he shall be found in any assembly, he will do it at his peril. For the necessary punishment will not fail. Remove, therefore, whither ye are commanded."

"Thus he compelled me, sick as I was; nor did he grant me a day's respite. What leisure, then, had I to hold assemblies, or not to hold them?"

Thus Dionysius was banished.

When persecution ceased, sedition and civil war came; the city was thrown into confusion, and the faithful were scattered. It became like a desert. The river was dyed with the blood of recent slaughters. From the putrid and noxious exhalations, so that the air was there was the gore of dead bodies pr



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A most devastating pestilence visited the city. The inhabitants were so reduced in number that Gibbon calculates half the population must have perished. Those who survived were wasted and wan. Of this visitation Dionysius informs us, and then he gives a particular account of the pestilence and the conduct of Christians. People were full of tears; all were mourning by reason of the multitude of the dead; but "many of our brethren," he says, "through their exceeding great love, neglecting themselves and befriending one another, constantly superintended the sick, fearlessly ministering to their wants, and healing their souls in Christ, and would have willingly died with them as it regards the body." Presbyters and deacons fell sacrifices to their zeal. Dying thus, they were accounted martyrs. Survivors took up their bodies, washed them, closed their eyes, carried them on their shoulders, composed their limbs, kissed, embraced, and clung to them. Among the heathen, it was the reverse of all this. They neglected the sick, and cast away the dead without burial.

At a later period, under Diocletian (A.D. 302), persecution raged in Alexandria with violence. An epistle by Phileas records the sufferings of the Christians. They were beaten with clubs, rods, thongs, and ropes. Some were fastened to and stretched on racks; pincers were applied to the body, the legs, and the face. People were hanged by the hand from a portico, or tied to pillars. Some were dashed on the pavement, or dragged along the ground. They perished under their torments, or, half dead, were thrust back to prison. Life was offered them on condition of their abjuring the Christian faith. "No," said they; "he that offereth to other gods shall be destroyed. Thou shalt have no other gods but me."

Such details as Eusebius preserves in his extracts from Dionysius and Phileas, are indeed very horrifying, but they have their moral and religious use. "I do not think," says Dr. Arnold, "that we consider the excellencies of this martyr spirit half enough. I do not think that pleasure is a sin; but though pleasure is not a sin, yet surely the contemplation of suffering for Christ's sake, is a thing most needful for us in our days, from whom, in our daily life, suffering seems so far removed. And as God's grace enabled rich and delicate persons, women, and even children, to endure all extremities

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of pain and reproach in times past, so there is the same grace no less mighty now; and if we do not close ourselves against it, it might be in us no less glorified in a time of trial."

### VI. — ALEXANDRIA UNDER THE CHRISTIAN EMPERORS.— ARIUS, ATHANASIUS, AND CYRIL.

The establishment of Christianity as the State religion, after the conversion of Constantine, altered the fortunes of Alexandria. Believers were no longer a proscribed and persecuted sect; but, favoured by the imperial smiles, increased in wealth and importance, and attracted towards them multitudes who were Christians only in name. This was one of the mischiefs of the change. Christianity being the religion of the empire, the doors of the church were open to all comers, not only for instruction, but for fellowship; the promiscuous crowds that rushed in because it was the fashion, because it was convenient and advantageous, soon rendered discipline impossible, dashed down all landmarks of the church as distinguished from the world, and put an end to the purity of congregational life. If nominal Christians in Alexandria before Constantine's time dishonoured their profession; if they were worldly and gay under Decius and Diocletian; if even persecution did not weed them out; how much more abundant must have been this harvest of spiritual tares when the sunshine of temporal prosperity encouraged their growth!

The history of Alexandria for two centuries was very much the history of Eastern Christendom. We do not profess to give that history, but only a few sketches of it; and, therefore, the reader will remember that a vast deal more occurred in the great Egyptian city connected with the early Christians than these few pages indicate.

The controversy about the nature of the Son of God, in itself a question of primary importance, but handled too often in a most objectionable manner, and in anything but a Christian spirit, greatly agitated the Alexandrians, for among them it arose. Arius, the champion of the heresy of Christ's created nature; Alexander, his bishop, who first opposed him; and Athanasius, the illustrious and indefatigable advocate of our Lord's true and proper divinity, were all connected with Alexandria. The metaphysical aspects of the inquiry were just such as were suited to the tastes of many; but ar-

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even the philosophical portion of the community, too much of a violent party spirit prevailed, while a multitude plunged into the dispute in the same coarse fanatical temper, which had wrought up their ancestors into madness and frenzy on the most frivolous points and paltry occasions.

Still there were those in Alexandria, on both sides, who conscientiously engaged in the struggle; and we have no doubt of the sincere and earnest piety of Athanasius, and many of his followers, and of the real service which, in spite of all his infirmities, he rendered to the cause of Christian truth. His sufferings were great as well as his toils, and Alexandria witnessed both. Christianity being adopted as the imperial faith, to be enforced on the popular conscience, it changed as the imperial faith changed. Christianity was Athanasian under an Athanasian Emperor. It became Arianised when an Arian ascended the throne. Constantius was an Arian, and he persecuted Athanasias.

The great theologian had ascended the episcopal throne of the city; for a throne the humble chair of the early bishop had now become. He was loved and honoured by a large party; and when, for the third time, he was expelled from the city, a scene occurred memorable in its history. He was engaged at night in the church of St. Thomas, with his flock around him, singing the Psalms of David, in celebration of Egypt's overthrow. Troops surrounded the building; they dashed in the doors; in went a flight of arrows; armour and drawn swords flashed amidst the crowd, and reflected back, in terrible radiance, the lamps calmly burning by the altar. The bishop was exhorted by his clergy to flee, but he refused to forsake his seat till he had dismissed his charge in safety. He escaped with his life, and lay concealed for six years, still exerting a mighty effect by his name, his writings, and his influence. After revelations of his history show to us the intrepid man, now in the deserts of the Thebaid, among the early monks, who had then sought refuge from the world's temptations; and again in Alexandria itself, secreted in a dry cistern; or, under the guardianship of a Christian lady, occupying a retired chamber, with his books and his papers, and thence despatching letters and treatises which moved the heart of Christendom, and made men wonder whence they came. The two scenes are very striking—Athanasius in his

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church, tranquil in the presence of the soldiery, and chiefly solicitous for the security of his flock; and Athanasius in his hidden retreat, devoting his days and nights to the study and defence of truth.

Passing to the end of the reign of Constantius, we find George of Cappadocia, an Arian, occupying the see of Alexandria. Devoted to pomp, luxury, and avarice, he disgusted the citizens by the monopolies he exercised, the taxes he caused to be levied, and the pillaging of temples, by which he enriched his church. He had at his disposal the right of selling nitre, salt, and paper, as well as that of conducting funerals. He suggested the revival of certain obsolete house duties. He envied the remaining wealth of heathen fames, and asked, "How long shall these sepulchres stand?" A violent struggle ensued between the populace and the bishop prince. The accession of Julian terminated the Arian's pontifical reign. He was dragged to prison, where he was afterwards murdered by the people. They seized his body, and placed it on a camel, savagely carrying the ghastly corpse in triumph through the streets.

Athanasius was now restored, to be again expelled. Julian hated him, and sent to the prefect of Egypt, saying: "I swear by the great Serapis, that unless, on the kalends of December, Athanasius has departed from Alexandria, nay from Egypt, the officers of your government shall pay a fine of a hundred pounds of gold. You know my temper; I am slow to condemn, slower still to forgive." The Bishop again retired to the monasteries of the desert.

And now another scene of excitement occurs in Alexandria. It is the end of the fourth century. An old temple of Bacchus has been turned into a church. In clearing away the rubbish, some obscene figures have been found. Theophilus, the bishop, exposes them as illustrative of the character of Pagan worship. This excites those who remain attached to the old religion. A riot ensues; blow is returned for blow, and people are killed. Olympias, a philosopher, a tall, well-made handsome man, with his eloquence, tames down the savageness of his party; and while, he tells them, they should be willing to die for the gods, still it becomes them to act peaceably. An order soon arrives from the Emperor, that all heathen temples shall be destroyed; and the exer

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entrusted to the bishop Theophilus. The citizens crowd to the Serapion. There stands the great temple—the object of veneration for so many years; and there is the image of the god, bushel-crowned, so hideous yet so sacred, constructed of timber and laden with metal; its huge arms reaching from wall to wall. The bushel on the head typified Jupiter, or plenty; the river Nile; or Joseph, who saved the corn of Egypt—for the Pagan archæologists are not agreed. To touch that statue is sacrilege in the estimation of many still. But see that stalwart soldier, with halbert in hand, as the bishop, the clergy, and crowds are looking on—heathen as well as Christian. He approaches the image and strikes it. Some expect an earthquake, or lightning, or celestial fury in some form. Nature, however, is quiet. The blow is repeated again and again, till the old lumbering figure is hewn to pieces. The heathen faith of some is shaken, the Christian faith of others is confirmed; while the fragments of the idol are carried away and burnt in the theatre. Alexandria has been full of busts of Serapis—as Ephesus was of Diana's shrines. They are all now swept away. The temple itself is overthrown to the foundations, and a Christian church erected on its site.

Some twenty years or more have passed away since the overthrow of the Serapion. A magnificent cathedral occupies its place, and hard by is the dwelling of Cyril, the patriarch: such is the title of the bishop now. He is in the cathedral. Go in; walk through the atrium. Enter the porch, and press through the crowd of penitents on the threshold. Look round on the basilica—its lofty walls and roofs, its tall columns, the spoils of temples, the elevated altar, and the Patriarch's chair yonder in the apse. What numerous priests; what gorgeous robes; what strains of music; and what a host of worshippers! And now Cyril ascends the pulpit—a comely man of harmonious and powerful voice, and he begins a homily. See, there are scribes jotting down notes. Now, as he stops for a moment, there is a murmur of applause. The preacher gets warm with his theme, and the people get noisy in their demonstrations of delight, till the church echoes with the loudest clapping, and the ladies, in sympathy, wave their handkerchiefs.

Cyril is the chief man in Alexandria, and more than the  
of the prefect Orestes. He exercises the power of a civil

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magistrate. He manages public and private charities. He has large organized bands for visiting the sick and burying the dead, and these he can sway and excite with a word or a nod. Crowds of monks come from the Thebaid, and obey his bidding. His power is immense and irresponsible. He is, in fact, dictator of the city. He has no mercy for heretics or Jews. He puts down the worship of the one, and attacks the synagogues of the other. There has been an assault on the latter, and the Israelites have avenged the injury. He banishes a number from the city. His episcopal power can summon agencies to carry out his despotic behests. Orestes is indignant. That, however, only fans the flames of resentment. Riding through the streets in his chariot, the prefect is attacked by a rabble of monks, when his guards desert him, and a stone flung in his face draws blood. The author of the insult is beaten to death by the victors. But Cyril counts him a martyr, and has his body carried in procession to the cathedral, where his tomb becomes a shrine, and his name receives saintly honours.

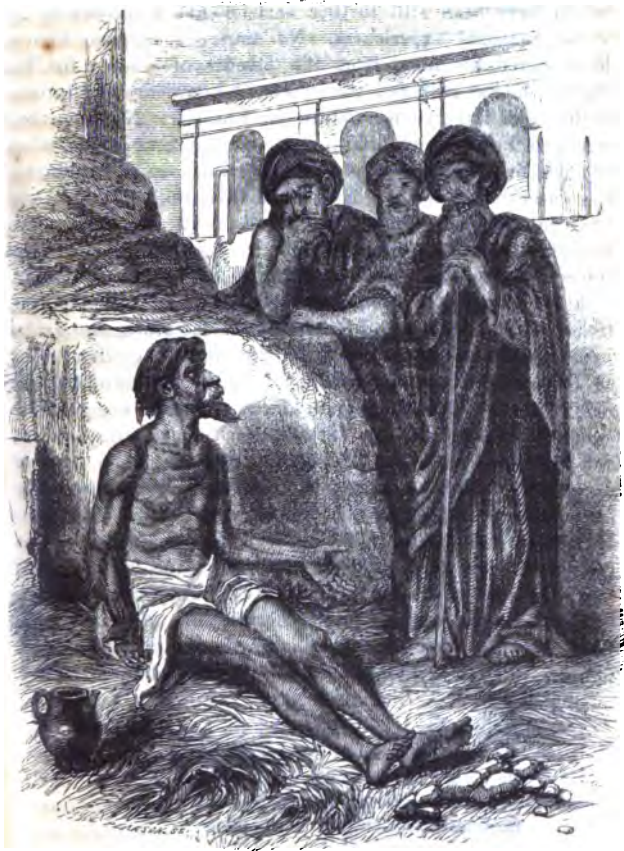
Now walk through the streets of Alexandria. They are as magnificent as ever. Christian churches vie with ancient buildings, and the streets are full of splendour, luxury, and commercial wealth. Here are chariots and palanquins, conveying ladies, sumptuously attired and attended by slaves. Here are soldiers and merchants on horses richly caparisoned. Here are strings of camels, bearing bales of cloth, and cases of gums, and boxes of spice and fruit. Here are asses, in long trains, bending under burdens of corn for the ships in the harbour. Here are enormous elephants, trampling along, and driving foot passengers into door-ways and corners. Here are monks and hermits, mingling with these scenes of plenty and luxuriousness. Yonder house, so elegant and tasteful, with horses and slaves crowding round the door, is the residence and school of Hypatia, a female philosopher, on whom has fallen the mantle of Plotinus. She lectures on the Absolute and the Infinite—dwells with mystic eloquence upon unintelligible abstractions—seeks to invest her speculation with a beauty and power that shall rival Christianity, in so far as to charm not a few, whose life is an eternal journey; but Hypatia can never touch the heart

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sorrow—can never raise the poor, debased and crushed under a load of ills. Cyril hates Hypatia because she has many admirers; he is jealous of her influence, and he abhors her philosophy; he regards her as an enchantress of souls, an enemy to the church, and a pest to Alexandria. Moreover, it is said that through her friendship with Orestes, the Prefect and the Patriarch are alienated from each other. Let her be removed, and they will soon become friends. One Peter, a reader in the church, gathers together a troop of wretched fanatics, and waylays the lady, who is riding out in Lent. Her chariot is stopped. The mob ruthlessly seize her, and carry her off to the great church, where she is torn to pieces with oyster shells, and there her remains are thrown into the flames. Some say Cyril had nothing to do with this: others shake their heads, and are silent.

Here we must draw our notices of Alexandria to a close—just mentioning that when the city fell into the hands of the Caliph Omar, in A. D. 640, Amrou, who took the place, described it as containing 4000 palaces, 4000 baths, 40 theatres, 12,000 shops for the sale of vegetable food, and 40,000 tributary Jews. The round numbers are a little suspicious; but no doubt in the hour of its fall this great African metropolis was still crowded with population, and enriched with wealth and splendour. Under Mussulman rule it declined, till its importance ceased upon the discovery of the Cape in 1497, when the stream of European and Oriental commerce was diverted from its old Egyptian channels. In modern times some revival has taken place, but with that we have nothing to do, since it is only some account of ancient Alexandria which this tract is intended to embrace.

## THE PATRIARCH OF UZ.



FAR back in the tranquil depths of past ages, we have vividly pictured to us the patriarch of Uz, the ~~great~~ ~~man~~ in all the East, in the bosom of his happy household, over which he ruled with ~~justice~~.



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and love. He has reached, if he has not already passed, the meridian of life, at the time when he appears before us, exciting our deepest interest. By thoughtful study and accurate observation he has accumulated vast stores of knowledge, which have been still further enriched and mellowed by his varied personal experiences. Nor must we suppose him to have stored his mind from the labours of others; for, like the bee, he has gathered the sweets of knowledge by interrogating and interpreting nature for himself. Nor do these treasures lie cold and profitless in the chambers of his mind, like the dried specimens of nature's wealth in the cabinet of the naturalist; but they live anew there, full of poetry and life, to proclaim with augmented force the glory and majesty of the great Creator. He has watched for years the starry heavens, and counted their movements with the ardour of a lover, because it is the Almighty "who maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south, and guides Arcturus with his sons." The aurora, those "golden lights of the north," as they streamed forth in flashes of fire-like brilliance, awed his soul; for to him they seemed the gorgeous robes of the Eternal One. The eastern tempest, the simoom, and the whirlwind, as they drove along from the east, or swept with scorching blasts over the sandy deserts, were the executioners of his terrible judgments. And what those emblematical creatures, full of eyes and brazen feet, seen in the vision, were to prophets of after times, the leviathan and other monsters of the Nile were to Job. They were symbols of the might and majesty of the Lord of all. Nature was his Bible. And as such he studied every form and shape, every winged fowl and creeping thing, the snow and hail, the dew and the dawn.

"He stretches out the north over the empty place,  
And hangeth the earth upon nothing.  
He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds,  
And the cloud is not rent under them.  
He holdeth back the face of his throne,  
And spreadeth his cloud upon it."

From this brief sketch of Job's mental opulence, we are led to speak of his temporal greatness; and we are able to form an approximate estimate of the extent of his riches from the inventory of his substance contained in the first

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chapter. Dr. Kitto, a very competent authority on such matters, reckons Job's possessions to have been worth something like £40,000; which sum, at that period, would have been equivalent to twice or even thrice what it is with us in the present day. Nor does this represent the full amount of his wealth; for, to what has already been enumerated, we must add his servants or slaves. The number of such dependants is not specified in the narrative. But if it be safe to rely on any inference from a comparison of Job with Abraham, these could have formed no inconsiderable portion of his wealth, and have added no little to his greatness and renown. In the case of Abraham, data are supplied in Gen. xiv. 14, whereby we may reckon the number of his household servants. For where so many existed capable of bearing arms, the aggregate, including women, and children, and aged persons, could not have been less than 1200 or 1300. And whereas the number of cattle and herds possessed by Job was probably greater even than that of Abraham, it would be safe to reckon the household of Job as at least equal to that of Abraham, and especially so, as in chapter i. 3, it is said to have been "very great."

Such ample resources, combined with such mental affluence, could not fail to command for their possessor the greatest veneration and respect. "Unto me men gave ear and waited; and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again." Nor were these marks of deference paid him by those alone who dwelt in the country; the same were offered him when he entered the city. "When I went out to the gate through the city," or, according to some, "through the gate into the city"—"when I prepared my seat in the street (or market-place), the young men saw me and hid themselves, and the aged arose and stood up. The princes refrained talking, and laid their hands on their mouth. The nobles held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me."

These outlines of Job's character and position are majestic and imposing, like those of some noble mountain, towers aloft among neighbouring hills; yet they are at the time beautifully harmonized and subdued by gentle graces of piety and love. If his

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princes with awe, his paternal wisdom and tenderness awakened a kind of filial affection and confidence in the hearts of humble men. To the widow he lent his counsel, and the hungry he fed at his table. The orphan he cherished as a father, and the naked he clothed with the fleece of his flock. He constrained the judge to deal out justice to the poor, and he delivered the crushed from the teeth of the oppressor. Even to his slaves he was a father; for he did not forget "that He who made him in the womb, made also them." In a word, all men blessed him, and "the candle of the Lord shone upon his head."

But while thus in the very zenith of his prosperity, he was suddenly brought to the very lowest abysses of adversity. From being the richest, he all at once became the poorest of men. Nor was this reverse of fortune sent as a chastisement for any special sin, nor because he had said to fine gold, "Thou art my confidence." Living in an age before men had learned to worship the work of their own hands, though by no means guiltless of frequently substituting the creature for the Creator, Job remained uncontaminated in his worship and obedience towards the God of heaven. He lifted not his hands to the sun or moon. And while as yet there existed no priestly class, whose business it was to keep alive the fires of sacrifice on the altars, and of devotion in the hearts of the people, yet he neglected not his sacred duties as the priest of his family. He had built an altar, perhaps on some sacred spot which had been a Bethel to his soul—the meeting-place of himself with God; and every day he rose up early, there to offer unto the Lord.

It was, indeed, while his heart was still glowing with holy fear and devotion at the altar where he had been presenting burnt-offerings to the Lord on behalf of his sons—lest haply they should "have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts"—that the first messenger of woe, with rapid feet and eager eye, hastened to communicate the sad tidings: "The oxen were plowing, and the asses were feeding beside them: and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only have escaped alone to tell thee." And ere he could finish his tale, there came running to him with breathless speed another servant, to describe how the lightning from heaven

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had struck all his sheep as they were quietly grazing, together with his shepherds; while he alone had been preserved alive to show what had befallen them. Scarcely had he been able to make known this dreadful visitation before he was interrupted by a third messenger, who had just arrived from another scene of disaster. The Chaldeans, it appears, had skilfully formed themselves into three parties, and rushing down from their mountain fastnesses and laying all the drivers dead upon the plain, had hastened away with all the camels; and he alone had escaped the sword of the plunderers. Nor was this all; the winds seemed also to have joined in some mysterious league against him. A fearful storm of the desert had swept over the house where his dear sons and daughters were assembled, and the building had fallen, burying them all beneath its ruins.

Here, then, for a while, there is a pause. But what could it all mean? Could all these forces of nature, and the wild and lawless passions of these marauding tribes, have conspired against him in one day by the mere caprice of chance or accident? Certainly not. Why then should He, who with his word controls all things, have suffered these adverse agencies to combine to complete what otherwise might have been left in Job's utter and absolute desolateness? Job knew not. Has the nature of the Eternal One, who had hitherto been so good and kind, undergone some sudden change? Job knew this could not be. Therefore, although he could not refrain from giving expression to his grief after the usual manner of the East, yet he knew he had no *claim* upon his Maker for anything, for originally he *was* nothing and *had* nothing. "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

After he had recovered from the first shock produced by these disasters, and while feeling within himself the full force and vigour of a healthful mind, he doubtless hoped, by wise and diligent exertion, to restore his ruined fortunes. He is not the man to sit down and idly resign himself for life to a reverse. He has courage enough to begin anew. But too quickly for this, another scene opens upon him. Suddenly his flesh is covered with sores and boils; and very soon he discovers that he is smitten with

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of all diseases, the black leprosy (*elephantiasis*). The approach of such a loathsome malady was a signal at which friends and neighbours, and, at length, even his wife, fled from him. Thus the fear of pollution deprived him of those kind attentions from friends which are so needed in affliction. No more pitiable sight can be conceived than this good man, fallen from his former greatness, sitting solitarily upon his dunghill, friendless and homeless, scraping his festering sores with a potsherd. The princes and elders of the city, who once bowed to him in lowly submission, now came not near the unfortunate sufferer; while those who were so far beneath him that they would gladly have accepted a place with the dogs of his flock, now mock him and curl their lips in scorn. But in the midst of sufferings and ignominies like these, although vehemently urged by his wife to curse his Maker, he sinned not with his lips: "for," said he, "shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not receive evil?"

What more can be done to aggravate the sufferings or deepen the sorrows of this good man? His substance has all been either stolen or destroyed; his sons and daughters torn from his bosom; his body smitten with the very worst of all diseases; and she, who is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, has turned his bitterest foe. Surely now all possible means of torture are exhausted. He knows full well that the divine treasure of a good conscience is still untouched, and will remain so unless he himself forfeits it by some crime. Sustained, therefore, by this blessed experience, he hopes that the worst has happened, and that the next act in the sad drama of his life will prove a remedial one. And what circumstance was more calculated to strengthen such a hope within him, than the arrival of his three old friends—Eliphaz from Teman, Bildad from Shuh, and Zophar from Naamath—who had come for the express purpose of comforting him. But, alas! he soon discovered that the worst had not befallen his afflicted soul; for these friends, instead of assuaging his grief, speedily began to display their ingenuity in inventing new miseries for his agonised heart. And this was all the harder to endure, because he had esteemed them wise and even good men: and he, furthermore, knew them to be moved to ill-will, even when their words were stinging him like

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scorpions; nor indeed was it because they were destitute of kindly human hearts. They were impelled by a mistaken sense of duty, and a desire to be faithful to their religious convictions. Job himself believed in the general truth of those principles by which they condemned him, although he knew also that his own case was an exceptional one. These principles prevented his friends from administering comfort to the sufferer, upon any other condition than that of his humble and penitential confession of some great guilt. At the very first sight of the solitary sufferer, as he sat drearily among the ashes—a fit emblem of his misery—tears of real anguish and grief were wrung from their hearts; and scarcely could they believe the testimony of their eyes that this was he whom they had known under such widely different circumstances. They rent their mantles, sprinkled dust upon their heads, and then sat down on the ground seven days and seven nights without articulating a word. Indeed, they deemed it proper to wait awhile to ascertain the effect produced on the mind of Job by these calamities, in order to determine whether it would be meet to administer comfort or rebuke.

After the prologue, which concludes at the end of the second chapter, this sublime poem opens with an address from Job. Then follow the three series of dialogues, in each of which the three friends of Job speak in their order of seniority, while each of their addresses is followed by a reply from Job. The first series occupies from chap. iii. to xiv.; the second series from chap. xv. to xxi.; and the third series from xxii. to xxxi. These dialogues are followed by an address from Elihu, and another from the Almighty out of the whirlwind; and the whole is concluded by an epilogue.

### THE FIRST SERIES.

While his friends were depressed in spirit and overwhelmed in grief to see the sufferer, Job himself felt much revived at the sight of their sympathising tears. They seemed tenderly to remind him that he was not wholly forsaken even on earth. And gathering courage from these signs of sympathy, he breaks the silence which had prevailed so long, by giving expression to the passionate wish that he had never been born; after which he is hurried o



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of the Most High and the imperfection of man, if brought before him in judgment. A description follows, couched in the sublimest poetry, of the mysterious working of God in nature, which is too subtle for us to trace out. "Lo, he goeth by me, and I see him not. He passeth on also, but I perceive him not." As little are we able to explain his dealings with man. He sends destruction and the sword, and seems indifferent upon whom they fall, whether on the perfect or the wicked man. "He will laugh at the trial of the innocent." And "if I wash myself ever so pure, it will not move him, for he would immediately purge me in the ditch; therefore my afflictions do not prove me guilty, as you suppose." Once more he falls back into the desponding complaint: "Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress; that thou shouldst despise the work of thy hands?" Nevertheless, he is sustained by a consciousness of sincerity, and filial love to God, though there struggles within him a general consciousness of imperfection. And this human weakness and imperfection again show themselves, in his passionate regret that he had not been conveyed from the womb to the grave.

Zophar in his turn steps forward on the field of strife. He evinces much less ability and amiability of temper than the other two friends. If in the beginning he possessed any kindly sympathy towards the fallen man, by this time he has evidently lost it all; for with his first breath he rudely charges Job with loquaciousness, and puts a false construction upon his words. "Thou sayest, thy doctrine is pure;" and "I am clean in thine eyes." This is false, as he intended it to be understood. Job never claimed for himself absolute purity. He only maintained his innocence of specific crimes which they insinuated against him as the cause of his terrible calamities.

Such unfairness in reasoning, and presumption in manners, are met by cutting irony from Job: "No doubt ye are very clever fellows, and when you die there will be an end of wisdom." But he does not indulge himself in the farther use of this figure of speech, since his object is not to vex and annoy his friends. He would rather, if possible, instruct them; for they had given no signs of wisdom superior to his. They seem to have but one idea, and to think this was the axis on which the universe revolved. From his wider

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experience, and truer reading of the lessons of God's providence, Job is able to teach them how inscrutable is the order by which good and evil, prosperity and adversity, are distributed among men by the Great Disposer of all things, who seems to take little account of what men are, evil or good. "The tabernacles of robbers prosper,....and he leadeth away counsellors spoiled. Yea, he increaseth nations and destroyeth them. He enlargeth nations and straiteneth them again. ... Mine eye hath *seen* all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it." "Would that I could make my appeal to the Almighty, for ye are all physicians of no value." Solemnly he proceeds to place before his disputations friends the dread majesty and the impartial justice of God, in order to deter them from continuing to defend Him by arguments which he knew to be false. Again he turns to God, begging of him either to remove his hand, or else to suffer him to plead his cause with him, whereby his faith would be strengthened. Then his voice seems to die away in the plaintive inquiry: "Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? And wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?" Once more, too, he breaks forth in melancholy tones expressive of the sadness of man's lot on the earth: "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble:....yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? He resembles not the tree, which will sprout out again even if its branches be lopped off; but is like the flood which the sun drieth up. Even thus he lieth down and riseth not." The thought of the grave causes him to break out in a vehement cry to God to hide him there, until his wrath be past. And for a moment the hope of another life after death seems to play like sunlight on the dark clouds which have gathered round his soul. But he is swayed hither and thither by the stormy passions of hope and fear, of faith and doubt, and neither is able to gain the complete mastery over the rest. But even this flickering hope from another life soon subsides into strong complaints—the strongest in which he has yet indulged—against his Maker, for his excessive severity toward the sons of men: "Thou destroyest the hope of man." Thus concludes the first dialogue.

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### THE SECOND SERIES.

The discussion is recommenced by Eliphaz, who is certainly the most argumentative and courteous, as well as the most venerable, man among the friends of Job. He now does not scruple to charge Job with indulging in too much talk, which is as unprofitable, he says, as the east wind. But, worse still, he charges him with casting off all piety, and rendering all his prayers to God worthless, by rejecting the urgent counsels of his friends to repent of his heinous offences. Eliphaz thinks he need go no further than his own words to find evidence of his guilt; for in his estimation he had perverted the ways of God, and, by a crafty use of them in his reasonings, endeavoured to form a screen for himself. And as Job chose to use irony in defending himself, Eliphaz retaliated by the retort: "Art thou the first man that was born? Wast thou admitted into the secret council of the Most High; and didst thou then set thyself up with wisdom? Thou despisest the consolations which true piety would give thee, and presumptuously reliest on thy own supposed righteousness. Dost thou think God will regard thee on that account? Behold, the heavens are not clean; how much less a poor, vain thing like man!" He concludes his second address by interweaving, with a few apophthegms and proverbs, descended from ancient times, a picture evidently intended to represent the case and circumstances of Job himself, yet so varied in some of its features as not to appear too personal. This device was intended to produce such an effect as reminds us of the Prince of Denmark, who said,

"The play's the thing

Whereby I'll catch the conscience of the king."

But the king was guilty, while Job was innocent, and hence the dissimilarity of effect.

Eliphaz failed in producing even surprise on the mind of Job, for he had advanced nothing new. "I have heard such things before. Miserable comforters are ye all." Once again he tells them how he would have comforted them, and fortified them with the words of his mouth, if they had been in his place, and he in theirs. In opposition to them, although they strive hard to move him to confessions of sin, he maintains the sincerity of his prayers, and his innocency from such transgressions as they imagined against him. As one friendless

and forsaken on earth, he flies for comfort to the thought of the witness to his sincerity which he has in heaven, and to him who knows his heart. And although, in addition to his appalling calamities, he may have to endure the misunderstandings and misjudgments of men, yet he will content himself by pouring forth his tears to God until he go the way whence he shall not return.

Without any kind of misgivings or fear, Bildad undertakes to reply to Job, although wholly at a loss for fresh arguments in support of his cause, which he mistakes for God's; and he soon begins to exhibit signs of other feelings and motives within him beside zeal for the truth. As if victory, at least, must be gained over Job, he asks, with evident warmth: "Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and are reputed vile in your sight? Does Job suppose it possible that God will reverse the laws of nature for his special convenience, or to prove him true and his friends false? Shall the earth be forsaken for him?" To this reproach Bildad is unable to add anything further, except to repeat the same general principles which he enforced in his first speech, under a little variation of illustration. This could never prove their truth, however it might serve to elucidate them. Then he concludes with the words: "The light of the wicked shall be put out. . . . His remembrance shall perish from the earth," etc.

Job returns to the task of self-vindication with bitter complaints against his friends for their unmitigated cruelty in continuing the same unbroken strain of reproach after his repeated assurances of freedom from any special sins. Even supposing he were guilty, as they allege, in that case they ought to show him some human sympathy, and not increase his torments, as if the punishment of the Almighty were not sufficient. And to convince them that his sufferings might be considered severe, even if he had been guilty in the way they imagined, he represents himself as a tent invaded by an armed host, and as suffering all the horrors of a beleaguered city, whose inhabitants, moreover, were at strife within. Hard, or altogether perverted by false principles, must be the heart which could refuse commiseration to one thus plaintively appealing to their sympathy: "Pity me, pity me, O my friends, for the hand of the Lord hath smitten me." But out of the dust he rises with buoyant wings of faith, and

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declares his belief in the approach of a day when his Vindicator will appear. Even though the loathsome disease, like worms, is eating off his skin; nay, although his flesh itself shall corrode from his bones, and leave him a bare skeleton; yet even then shall he see God, who will vindicate his cause, and clear him in the sight of all living. "What will YE then do, my friends?" asks the sufferer. "Are not ye afraid of some retaliation upon your heads for the evil ye are inflicting upon me, and for the perverse things which ye have said of God?"

But as Job thus rises to calm and confident hope, his friends become more and more passionate and unfeelingly personal. Zophar adds nothing new or more convincing in the way of argument. It is the same old tune, only sung with more venom. He now gives a catalogue of crimes which God punishes, he says, with the utmost rigour. He does not say Job is guilty of them, though that is what he means. There is only one bitter sting remaining in his power, and that he reserves to the last dialogue, when he says after his parable, "*Thou art the man.*" For the present he contented himself by relating it, and giving it only a general application, "Such is the portion of the wicked man from God."

Job once more takes up his argument, alas! with little hope of convincing his friends. He knows now, full well, what a profitless task it is. But it is soothing to his anguish even to be permitted to tell his sorrows. Yet he is not at a loss for arguments to defend his cause, for facts are against the conclusions of his opponents. "The wicked *do* live, become old and mighty in power; and their sons and daughters abound in prosperity after them. Yea, they that say to God, 'Depart from us,' frequently descend quietly into the tomb. But if it be said, 'God reserveth the punishment for their children,' what do they care for that? for what pleasure or concern have they in their families when they are gone?" God does not always consider what a man is, whether evil or good, in order to determine for him suffering or pleasure.

"One dieth in his full strength,  
Being wholly at ease and quiet.  
His breasts are full of milk,  
And his bones are moistened with marrow.  
And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul,

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And never eateth with pleasure.  
They shall lie down alike in the dust,  
And the worms shall cover them."

Thus—he proceeds in effect to say—in your arguments there remaineth falsehood, since they are contrary to experience and to the facts of real life, when you assert that suffering comes only upon the wicked, and prosperity is always measured out to the righteous.

## THE THIRD SERIES.

Once more Eliphaz takes the lead in the discussion; and he but too plainly shows how completely without effect the arguments of Job have been, either in convincing his opponents of the erroneousness of theirs, or in calling forth kinder and more comforting words. So far from this having been the issue, they have reserved their keenest instruments of torture until now. At first they contented themselves with general statements of their principles; then they proceeded to illustrate them by referring to facts and imaginary instances, but still refrained from wounding Job by applying them directly to him; now, however, they shrink at nothing in order to gain their point. Eliphaz plainly and directly charges his friend with the grossest crimes, and specifies them in order by name. But he was able to reply to Job's facts only by alluding to others of an opposite character, apparently to the flood and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, as evidences of the terrible end which comes upon the wicked, who say to God, "Depart from us." Such allusions could not disprove the truth of Job's veracity, when he said he had seen the wicked prosper and go quietly down to the grave. Both Job and his friends might have been right as to their facts. All that was needed was a broader view of the principles of God's providential government, to harmonize events apparently so diverse. But this was beyond the compass and range of thought at the command of Eliphaz, or his friends. The only harmony they could make was by stretching all facts to suit their one idea. The only hope and comfort they were able still to hold out to the fallen man was through humbling himself before God, and confessing some enormous guilt. "Then shalt thou reckon treasure as dust. Then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God."

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Job responds by a sorrowful lament that he can nowhere find God, so as to lay his case of woe before him, and obtain some satisfactory response. No doubt he felt an inexpressible load of solitude. Man was made for sympathy, and he could find none. One word from the Almighty would ease him of his burden, and he could dispense with the sympathy of his friends. But, "I go forward (eastward), he is not there; backward (westward), but I cannot perceive him: on the left (north), but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right (south), that I cannot see him."

"Stars silent rest o'er us,  
Graves under us silent."

The next moment he bows with humble submission to Him who is "of one mind, and who doeth what his soul desireth." Then he turns to reply to the allegations of Eliphaz, by describing, in language of astonishing force and poetic beauty, what he had seen, and what no one could deny, among the marauding tribes of the desert. They live by plundering the flocks of the industrious, and by robbing all over whom they have power to prevail. They are permitted to live in safety; and at death they are taken away as others. Nay, they are cut off as the tops of the ears of corn. Job challenges his opponents to disprove the truth of these things.

It falls to the lot of Bildad to attempt to refute what was patent to all. Instead, however, of addressing himself to the matter in hand, he begins by dilating upon the majesty of God in a manner which, under other circumstances, might have been considered good and excellent, but now totally irrelevant. Evidently exhausted, and, if that be possible, feeling the weakness of his cause, he closes after uttering a very few sentences.

With words of galling irony, Job retorts by asking Bildad "How hast *thou* helped the feeble? (In allusion to his opponents, whose cause was getting hopeless.) How hast *thou* plentifully declared the thing as it is?" Then, as if he would show himself to be perfectly at home upon the mighty subject on which Bildad began to discourse, in far sublimer and loftier language he proceeds to speak of the wondrous operations of the Almighty displayed in the works of creation; and once more he reiterates his innocence, and declares his determina-

tion to maintain his own integrity and righteousness until his dying day.

We have now to face a difficulty. According to our English version, and indeed it is the same with the Hebrew text, Zophar does not appear to make any third reply to Job, as the other friends had done. Nor is this all; if chapter xxvii. 11—23 be taken as a continuation of Job's address, then he seems to contradict all his other speeches, and to admit the thing he has all along been denying. We shall not pretend to *settle* the difficulty; not, however, because it admits of no solution. The fact is, there are several ways of solving it. These we shall state, and leave the reader to accept what seems to him most reverent to the word of God, and most in harmony with truth and reason.

One of the earliest attempts to reconcile the apparent contradiction was made by Coverdale, in his translation of the Scriptures (A.D. 1553), by inserting the word "saying," at the end of the twelfth verse. Thus he has made Job repeat, not his own sentiments, but those of his friends. There is, however, no MS. authority for introducing this word, and yet it affects the text less than some of the other methods of reconciliation proposed, and it supplies a very good meaning, and really removes a difficulty.

The learned Dr. Kennicott conjectured that the Hebrew text is imperfect, some copyists having, by oversight, left out the usual form of words to introduce a fresh speaker, after the reply of Job to Bildad at the end of the tenth verse. The learned commentator conceived, therefore, that we really have the speech of Zophar in verses 11 to 23; although, as our text stands, the words introducing him have disappeared. Of course, if this hypothesis be correct, a like omission must have taken place at the beginning of chapter xxviii., where Job is supposed to come forward in reply to Zophar. This solution is adopted by Wemyss, and the former one by Barnes.

There is a third explanation of the difficulty, to which we incline, and it is one which does not require the supposition of imperfection in our text of the Scriptures. Job has reduced his friends to silence by his facts. That is certain. After proving, by wonderful power of reasoning and illustration, that the wicked actually *do* sometimes enjoy prosperity and die at ease, he gave the challenge, "Who will ———"



a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?" His friends showed themselves vanquished by remaining silent. Job, therefore, having gained his point, could afford to admit, what he never has denied, the calamities which sometimes do fall as a punishment upon the transgressor. All he desired to establish was, the fallaciousness of supposing there existed any general or unvarying law which compelled the Almighty to punish the wicked, and to reward the good in this life. God is free. He follows his own secret designs; and these are hid from all mortal eyes. This is the ultimate conclusion to which he is brought—the foundation-thought of all his other thoughts and feelings on this very mysterious subject. And now he proceeds to unfold it with marvellous grandeur in chapter xxviii., where he speaks of the ingenuity and industry of men in finding out the most secret things contained in the hidden depths of the earth; and yet they are unable to discover the place of wisdom—the wisdom of the divine mind, according to which he distributes prosperity here and adversity there; joy to this man, and sorrow to the other. That wisdom is divine, and belongs alone to God; and unto man God said, "Behold the fear of the Lord, that is (*thy*) wisdom; and to depart from evil, that is (*thy*) understanding." On this truth Job had rested in the beginning when he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." But just as the needle, when shaken, will oscillate now to the east and then to the west, but will finally rest in the north; so Job, shaken and agitated by his afflictions, and especially by the unfeeling cruelties of his friends, swerved sometimes a little to the right and then to the left; yet at length, in like manner, attains the centre of rest. After this, how natural for him to look back upon the days gone by, "when the candle of the Lord shone upon his head; when his children were about him; and when, in the abundance of his prosperity, he washed his steps with butter; and the rock poured out rivers of oil before him." Nothing is more natural, under such circumstances, than the plaintive longing, "Oh, that I were as in months past." And why should he not cherish such a wish, since he does not charge God with harshness.

A sublime picture now follows of his former greatness, some features of which we have already borrowed in our opening sketch of the good man's pristine condition. What

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a full and unruffled consciousness of purity of aim and sincerity of heart must have possessed him when pourtraying the moral aspects of his character. How stern was his chastity! what mercy tempered his justice towards his slaves! what paternal regard for the poor and destitute! what unworldliness in the midst of wealth! and, above all, and as the foundation of all, what unwavering fidelity to his God! But, alas! ere finishing this enchanting picture, he is once more carried too far away in his desire to justify himself before the Almighty, as if he were *deserving* and could *claim* from the Righteous One some better fate!

### ELIHU.

In the company of these disputants, there had been one whose voice until the present had been unheard. The author of the book of Job does not inform us when, and under what circumstances, Elihu had been introduced to the company. But we are by no means at liberty to assume, as some have taken upon themselves to do, that only those were present during the discussion whose names appear in the prologue. It is even possible that there might have been others present besides Elihu, whose names are not given. A great variety of opinions have been propounded respecting this individual. Some have so magnified the importance of his speeches, in relation to the solution of the problem of the book, as to conclude him to have been none other than the Incarnate Deity; while other critics have considered them of so little value to the progress of the argument, as by a flight of fancy to conclude his speeches to be the addition of some later writer. In support of their verdict, they have adduced the fact of the omission of his name both in the prologue and epilogue. Such critics are more bold than wise. A complete catalogue of the *dramatis personæ* would have been quite out of place in the prologue. On the contrary, there is a naturalness in Elihu's self-introduction, which harmonizes well with his character. He falls readily into his place. After the somewhat stormy conclusion of the dialogues, the tempest which accompanied the words of the Most High could not so fitly have followed. In beautiful analogy with nature, after the stillness and calm produced by the address of Elihu, the words spoken during the raging of the storm strike the ear with awful grandeur.

## THE PATRIARCH OF UZ.

Elihu comes forward as a young man who has hitherto refrained from speaking his thoughts out of deference to the superior age of Job's three friends. Now that they are reduced to silence, it is allowable for him to speak. In introducing himself, he says more in self-commendation than is usual with men in the Old Testament, when burdened with any divine message. Nor can we perceive the great difference, in the substance of his discourse, from the preceding speakers, that, in the opinion of some, warrant this self-praise. It is true that his spirit is generally more temperate, and his applications are for the most part less offensively personal, than the later speeches of the three disputants. In spirit and style of argument, he bears a close resemblance to Eliphaz in his opening address. Yet he puts a harsher construction upon the words of Job than they will properly bear, with the too apparent design of making the case of Job worse than it really was. Take for example chapter xxxv. 2: "Thou saidst, My righteousness is more than God's." Undoubtedly Job was betrayed, by his afflictions, and especially by the cruel conduct of his friends, into the use of unwarrantable language concerning himself and God. It was not right of his friends, however, to magnify his fault, especially as it might never have been committed, had they soothed and comforted him instead of irritating and vexing his spirit. Elihu is a partizan of the doctrines proclaimed by the friends of Job, concerning the calamities which come upon the wicked; and when he speaks of them as falling upon the righteous, he does not even hint at the possibility of their coming for any other object than as a chastisement from the Lord, for some sins into which they have fallen. (Comp. xxxiv. 31, with 36, 37; also comp. xxxvi. 7, with 8, 9, and 10.) He consequently falls into a similar error with that of the three friends, of attributing the severe sufferings of Job to his terrible crimes; and there is one shaft hurled by Elihu which is more piercing than those cast in the heat of passion by Eliphaz and his coadjutors, because it was projected with a cool and deliberate aim: "Take heed, regard not iniquity, for *this* hast thou chosen rather than affliction."

But notwithstanding an occasional cutting expression, the address of Elihu contains many fine and noble sentiments. With great poetic beauty and fervour he speaks of the majesty,

#### THE PATRIARCH OF UZ.

wisdom, and power of God. But he certainly does not shed any light upon the mysterious ways of God in his dealings with the children of men, which may not also be found in the speeches of Eliphaz and his friends; and this was the special subject needing illumination. If, therefore, the solution of the grand problem of the book is not to be found in the addresses of the three friends; it certainly cannot be found in the discourse of Elihu. And in none of them can we find anything in this respect approaching the discourses of Job contained in the twenty-eight chapter, and the profound conclusion contained in the words, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, that is understanding." He here teaches us that man's wisdom is not to pry into the secrets of the divine government, which are beyond his reach in this world; but to confide in him, and do his will. This is the stage to which the argument may be said to have been brought at the point immediately preceding the divine interposition; but it has been brought thus far, be it observed, by Job himself, and not by his friends.

#### THE ADDRESS OF DEITY.

One of the sublimest descriptions of a thunderstorm to be found in the whole range of literature, ancient or modern, human or divine, is contained in the concluding portion of Elihu's address. It has been supposed to have been occasioned by the storm then gathering, in which the Almighty was about to utter his voice. "Hear attentively the sound of his voice," etc., seem to allude to the distant murmurs which were beginning to be heard. And, probably, Elihu was interrupted by the voice of God, which stilled every tongue and engaged every ear: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?"

"To put suitable language in the mouth of God," says an eloquent writer, "has generally tasked to straining, or crushed to feebleness, the genius of poets. Homer, indeed, at times, nobly ventriloquizes from the top of Olympus; but it is ventriloquism—Homer's thunder, not Jove's. . . . The entrance of God into this poem is the most daring, and the most successful of all poetic interventions. God himself turns the scale of the argument. The disputants have enveloped themselves in a cloud of words. A whirlwind:

## THE PATRIARCH OF UZ.

now scatter them. No vehicle for this awful umpire is like a whirlwind. The speech is worthy the accompaniments of the speaker. It is a series of questions following each other, like claps of thunder. Abrupt, jagged, unanswered, it gives the idea of infinitude. You feel that they reach the highest possible point of sublimity, and the pause which follows is profound as the stillness of the grave. The voice even of poetic melody, immediately succeeding, had seemed impertinent and feeble. The cry of penitence and humility, 'Behold, I am vile,' is alone fit to follow such a burst, and to cleave such a silence."

In the first part of the address, Job is asked what right he has to complain of God. "Where wast thou when God hung this huge world upon nothing, and sent it spinning amongst the worlds of space? How did the Almighty calculate and arrange the movements of these worlds, and establish the sublime order of suns, and moons, and stars? How did he scoop out the earth to receive the waters of the sea, and bind in its thundering waves? Hast thou been up into the treasures of the snow and hail, so that thou canst explain all the mysteries of their formation and distribution on the earth? When thou retirest to rest, the earth is hot and parched by the sun's scorching heat; but when thou risest up, every blade of grass and every leaf is gemmed with sparkling dew. By whose curious art were they polished and set? Think of the multitude of beasts, and birds, and creeping things: canst thou tell them what is good for food, and where each one may find it? Canst thou lead them all forth in the morning, and drive them to their rest in safety at night? Puny man, if thou knowest nothing, and canst do nothing, on this grand stage of operation; if there be a wisdom here higher than thine, wilt thou complain of that same wisdom when it is guiding thee from day to day, because thou wouldest rather be fondled in the lap of ease than be led even by the path of adversity, as that wisdom shall see fit? Wilt thou now reprove God? If so, answer me."

Job has nothing to answer, except, "I am vile."

Again God proceeds: "Wilt thou disannul or reverse my judgment? Wilt thou maintain that I ought to have dealt differently with thee than I have done? Dost thou think to make me confess I have done thee wrong? Hast thou power,

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glory, and majesty like me? If so, then I will admit that thine own hand can save."

The address concludes with a matchless display of the awful majesty and might of God, under descriptions of the most powerful and terrific of his creatures, the hippopotamus and crocodile. "Canst thou draw out the crocodile with an hook? Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or his head with fish-spears? When he riseth up, mighty heroes are afraid. Who is able then to stand before ME?"

Job is now overwhelmed with a sense both of the impenetrable wisdom and the irresistible power of God. He can frame no reply. He had longed to meet the Almighty as one meets the judge at an earthly tribunal. Now the opportunity is afforded him, he has nothing to plead. His only language is: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The argument is thus advanced one stage further, and the grand lesson for Job, and for us all, is: He had not to submit to his calamities because they were sent by an Almighty Power, which he could not resist: that is fatalism and heathenism. He must bear them with patient submission, because he knows them now to be directed by the same inscrutable wisdom which guides all the mysterious but beneficent operations of nature.

But the reader still feels that, after all, the great problem remains unsolved; not only as it relates to the hidden cause of suffering in good men in general, but of Job's sufferings in particular. The question to which we are all awaiting a reply remains unanswered. Why was Job, the most perfect and upright man of all the East, made a mark for all the arrows of misery and calamity that assailed him? The address of Deity leaves this question surrounded with mystery still. But we must bear in mind, the design of this address was to instruct and counsel Job as to the thoughts and feelings he should cherish under his calamities, and *not* to reveal the purpose for which they had been sent. It was not the intention of the Almighty to let him see and understand *why* he had been called to suffer, just as he sometimes does not permit us to know why we are called to suffer. The solution of the problem was intended not for Job, but for *us*, in order that we might learn, not indeed the design of God in all the

sufferings he sends on men, because they may be different in every case; but why *Job* was thus visited with wave upon wave of sorrow. And when we come to see the divine significance of his sorrows, although it was hid from him; and then, when we further see the increased prosperity which returned to him as a compensation for his sufferings, when the end had been answered; our faith under our afflictions is strengthened, even though the Divine purpose may in like manner be hid from us.

Where, then, are we to look for an answer to the question, Why were these afflictions visited upon this holy man? We answer, In the prologue. Not on the earth, but in heaven. For once the veil is uplifted, and we are carried away into the secret place of wisdom, the council chamber of Deity. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also amongst them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, **DOETH JOB FEAR GOD FOR NOUGHT?** . . . . . *Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face."*

Satan had been going to and fro in the earth, and had, perhaps, heard these slanders. He himself might even have been suggesting them to some of Job's envious and jealous neighbours and friends, and stirring them up to circulate these calumnious reports. God knew it was all a lie and a vile reproach against his servant Job; and he determined to put him to the test, and so to refute the slanderous accusations which had been hurled against him. The accuser should see, and so also should any whom he might have tempted to think his evil thoughts, that Job did *not* serve God for what he could get by the service, but because he loved it and loved God, and that even "though he slew him, he would still trust him." Abraham was tried to prove his faith; and Job was afflicted to prove the disinterestedness of his love and service to God. Job stood the test, as Abraham did. And when the impossibility of removing Job from his integrity

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became evident to the eyes of all, then God gave to him twice as much as he had before, and blessed his latter end more than his beginning.

Thus Job suffered, not for himself, excepting to clear his own character and reputation from the aspersions of slander. He endured sorrow and afflictions for others, to refute their errors, and so to reclaim them to right thoughts and feelings towards himself and truth. Job is, therefore, a type of Him whose visage was marred more than any man's, for the purpose of reclaiming and redeeming us from *all* errors and sins. Why it should have been necessary for the innocent One to suffer for the guilty is a mystery of still deeper import; but it lies at the foundation of that unfathomable scheme upon which God has founded the future history of redeemed humanity.

## II.

After the foregoing attempts to explore this truly unique and wonderful book—in which we have been permitted not only to read its incidental and more obvious lessons, but also to lift the veil of the invisible world, and derive thence some clear rays to illumine the path of life, we come now with a deeper interest to consider some questions rising in the thoughtful mind. To what age and country did Job belong? Who was the author of the book; at what period was it written; and to what class of compositions is it to be assigned? The very scanty, and on some of these points the entire absence of any authentic data by which to arrive at any definite conclusions, have given to Biblical scholars free scope for conjecture and indulgence in ingenious theories. And to reach anything like certainty seems as hopeless a task as the attempt to determine the age and parentage of Melchisedec. We shall content ourselves with applying a brief summary of the different opinions, offering here and there a remark or two by way of suggestion.

## JOB'S AGE AND COUNTRY.

The inspired record informs us that Job's dwelling-place was Uz; yet it is difficult to determine the precise locality of the spot so designated. If we assume the place to have been so called from some person bearing that name, we have then to identify the particular individual from several others in the sacred Scriptures. And supposing this dif



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mounted, even then much doubt and obscurity would exist as to the district which was so designated after him. The first Uz mentioned in Scripture was the grandson of Shem; another Uz, or Huz, was the nephew of Abraham; and a third was a descendant of Esau. Rosenmüller contends with great force for the second Uz, the son of Nahor, and maintains the locality founded by him to have corresponded with the northern part of Arabia Deserta, or the Syrian Desert. Mr. Barnes differs from the great scholar just named, as regards the founder, but agrees with him respecting the district of Uz. Dr. Kitto, on the other hand, differs in opinion upon both these points. He believes, with Barnes, that the grandson of Shem was the founder of Uz; but supposes its locality to have been very far up the Euphrates, at the foot of Mount Taurus, between Orfah and Diabekir. The arguments adduced in support are, however, we think, scarcely sufficient to warrant the conclusion. Granting that Aram, the father of Uz, gave his name to the whole of Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, as well as Mesopotamia Proper, and assuming his son to have given the name of Uz to *some* particular part of this district, strong evidence is needed for identifying this country with a region so remote. If Dr. Kitto finds traces of certain traditions in this neighbourhood, they are to be found in other localities also. And if certain allusions in the book of Job to changes of climate, from winter's frost and ice to summer's sultry and parching heat, and to the operations of those who work in mines, seem to correspond with features belonging to the district of Mount Taurus; these are more than counterbalanced by other allusions of an opposite character, which appear more nearly to accord with the climate and scenery of Egypt and Idumea. And further, it is more than questionable whether this region would have been called "the east" by the sacred writers. Upon the whole, the opinion of Rosenmüller, adopted also by many eminent scholars, seems to have on its side the greatest weight of probability.

This opinion receives additional confirmation from the probable contiguity of this district with the Chaldeans and Sabeans. And Teman, the country of Eliphaz, could not have been far distant. Elihu, moreover, was a Buzite; and since Buz means *in Uz*, or a *dweller in Uz*, Elihu must have been conveniently situated for visiting the afflicted saint.

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The same kind of obscurity hangs over the question—*When* did Job live? The internal evidence of the book is sufficient to indicate a very remote antiquity, and probably during the patriarchal age. The absence of any allusion to the law of Moses and the history of the Israelites, is a strong presumption in favour of a period anterior to the Mosaic age. For we cannot conceive how Job would have refrained from all reference to the remarkable events narrated in the books of Moses, so pertinent to his own case, provided they were known to him. We are fully aware of the attempts which have been made to discover some traces of the Pentateuch in the book of Job. But the supposed allusions are so vague and obscure, as to render it extremely improbable that they are anything more than such accidental resemblances as might be found on comparing any other two ancient writings with each other. Beside this, the Israelitish period was universally characterised by the prevalence of idolatry, and the institution of a priestly caste. No traces of either of these are to be discovered in the book of Job. And Job, as the father of his large household, was its priest. In chapter xxxi. 26, 27, reference is made to the adoration of the sun and moon. This is indicative of an intermediate or transition period, between the worship of the true God and the worship of idols. These striking circumstances very plainly point to a pre-Mosaic age.

Beyond this, perhaps, it is not safe to venture. Yet those who are of opinion that Moses was the author of the book, and the grandson of Shem the founder of Uz, reduce the question within still narrower limits. In this case, the trial *must* have taken place about the time of Abraham or Isaac.

An ingenious method has been tried to settle the question, from the celestial allusions in the book. The Pleiades and Orion have been supposed to correspond with the constellations Taurus and Scorpio. From calculations based upon the precession of the equinoxes, these constellations are found to have been the leaders of spring and autumn respectively, about the year 2130, B.C., or 184 years before the birth of Abraham. This result would be as exact to truth as astronomical calculations invariably are, provided Pleiades and Orion could be unmistakeably identified with Taurus and Scorpio; but, wanting this proof, the conjecture is use-

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### THE AGE AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOK.

If we knew with certainty the exact time when Job lived, we should be still left in uncertainty as to the date when the book bearing his name was written; and if we canvas the opinions of the learned upon the subject, we shall discover the strangest diversity. It would be idle to make a parade of learned names upon our pages, placing them in rank and file according as they may suppose it to have been written in the time of Job, of Moses, of David, or of Solomon, or even still later, for advocates are not wanting who assign it to a period as late as the Captivity. Suffice it to say, each of these ages has had the advocacy of many great names, who have not been wanting in arguments to support their conjectures. Those who maintain the latest origin of the book, either regard Job as a fictitious person, and the book nothing more than a lengthened parable; or, while believing him to have been a real being, and living, perhaps, in the remote patriarchal age, they conceive the whole book to rest on the slenderest basis of fact, the substance of it being wrought out of the imagination of its author under the influence of inspiration. A larger measure of historic truthfulness is believed to exist in the book by those who suppose it was written in the age of Solomon. In reply to the former hypothesis it has been said, that in an age of decay and corruption like that of the Captivity, when the institutions and even the *language* of the people were fast going to corruption, a book so grand in its conception and so sublime in its style, could not have then been planned and executed. Inspiration, it is urged, never supersedes or conceals weakness and defects, or the brilliancy and glory, of the age wherein it works. This objection does not apply to the second hypothesis, for Solomon's was the golden age of Hebrew literature. It may safely be concluded, we think, that the composition belongs to a period between the time of Job and Solomon. Yet, if it were written in the earlier half of that period, it is strange that there is no allusion to the book in any of the sacred writings prior to the time of David. Why no use should have been made of a life so full of vicissitudes, yet ending so well, is inexplicable, had the authors of those compositions been conversant with it. It would have served to explain and enlighten many a dark

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passage in the history of the chosen people. Yet no use of it is made, and the supposition of its later composition alone explains the otherwise unaccountable fact.

We have, if possible, still less to guide us on the question of authorship. A lengthened array of reasons is adduced by different biblical critics, in favour of Job, Elihu, Joseph, Moses, and others, according as partiality, or consistency with their opinion respecting the age of the book, may require. But where God has not chosen to enlighten us, it is better ingenuously to confess our ignorance.

### THE CLASS OF COMPOSITION TO WHICH THE BOOK BELONGS.

Inquiries belonging to this branch of the subject may be pursued with far greater satisfaction and profit, since they bear upon the understanding and interpretation of the work; but whatever additional light may be attainable can come only through the study of the book itself, and not from any extraneous source. In whatever obscurity the name of the architect, or the age of erection, may be involved with respect to any temple saved from the all-devouring teeth of time, the traveller can at least interest himself in the style and composition of the edifice. And his understanding of these will increase with the length of time and the earnest thought he may bestow upon the inquiry. It is precisely similar with this ancient book, as regards investigations into its style and structure.

Some men of eminence have regarded the book as a continued allegory, or an imaginary narrative. This notion prevailed among many ancient Jewish writers. In the Talmud the book is treated as a parable, and Job as a fictitious being. The accomplished Bishop Warburton, in his "Divine Legation of Moses," labours to prove the allegorical composition of the work; he contends that it was designed to represent the Jews under their afflictions in captivity, and to assure them of their ultimate deliverance. Other scholars consider the book, notwithstanding its poetical form, to be strictly historical, and a faithful record of events and speeches as they actually occurred or were delivered. The author was, therefore, a mere compiler of speeches and records furnished to his hand.

To each of these theories belongs its special difficulties. The first ignores—to say the least—the evi-

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and frame-work of the book; for, if these be evidence of the historical reality of any person mentioned in Scripture, it must be allowed, by any impartial mind, that such exists in favour of Job. In Ezek. xiv. 14, 20, he is classed, not with fictitious personages, but with Noah and Daniel.

Against the second theory may be urged the artificial and poetical composition of the book, producing such a structural unity as could scarcely have unfolded itself spontaneously out of the successive addresses of different individuals. The unity of impression produced on the mind from the study of the work evinces the working out of the conceptions of *one* mind, rather than of many. Nor is this all: a still more formidable difficulty meets this view in the scene represented in heaven, contained in the prologue. Those who maintain the entire literalness of the composition have not been insensible to this difficulty. Some, with a determination to be consistent, and to carry their theory through all difficulties, have not scrupled to affirm this scene to be true in *fact*. Others, such as Dr. Kitto, consider this portion of the book allegorical, and, therefore, true only in *idea*.

There is a third theory, intermediate between that of Warburton on the one hand, and that of the literalists on the other. This represents the book as a poetical composition of one divinely inspired mind, drawn from such traditional or other records as may have been furnished to him concerning Job's wondrous and till then inexplicable history. This view of the case will allow of any conceivable amount of historical material employed by the author in the composition of his work. It harmonises, therefore, both with the reality of Job's history and with the poetical form of the book, and it will allow of an explanation of the scene in heaven.

We have alluded to the artificial structure of the book of Job. An illustration must now be supplied. This consists mainly in the principle of triplicates, on which the composition is grounded, by which it expands with the beautiful symmetry of a tree. First, it branches forth into three grand members, then each of these into three others, each of which in turn divides itself into three more, which process is repeated until every word hangs like a leaf—until the whole skeleton is covered with forms of beauty. The first grand division is into—I. PROLOGUE, (chapters i. ii.); II. POEM (iii.—xlii. 6);

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III. EPILOGUE (xliii. 7—17). THE PROLOGUE is subdivided into—1. *Job's Prosperity* (i. 1—5); 2. *Losses* (6—22); 3. *Sickness* (ii.). THE POEM is also subdivided into three leading members. 1. *The dispute of Job with his friends* (iii.—xxxi.); 2. *The address of Elihu*, the self-constituted arbitrator (xxxii.—xxxvii.); 3. *The address of God*, the true arbitrator. Each of these parts is again further divided. *The dispute of Job with his friends*—(a) Series of dialogues (iv.—xiv.); (b) A second series (xv.—xxi.); (c) A third series (xxii.—xxxi.). Then the address of Elihu and of Deity are capable of a triplicate division. THE EPILOGUE is also thus distributed—1. *Job's justification* (xlii. 7—9); 2. *Reconciliation* with his friends (10, 11); 3. *Final prosperity* (12—17). This interesting subject might be still further expanded. Sufficient, however, has been done to enable the reader to follow this principle of triplicates into still further detail. And we may observe, by way of suggestion, that it would be useful, as an aid to the reading and study of this book, if our readers would take pains in marking these divisions and subdivisions, with their appropriate headings, in the margins of their Bibles appropriated to private use.

This intermediate theory, again, by avoiding the extremes of the literalists and of the allegorizers, may enable us also satisfactorily to explain, and to harmonize with the rest of the book, the scene in heaven, which, according to every other theory, presents such insurmountable difficulties. In many other parts of the sacred Scripture, God has employed the imaginations of holy men in the construction of poetic imagery, as well as the more abstract terms of the understanding as vehicles for conveying spiritual truths to the human mind. If evidence of this were required, we might refer to the inspired compositions of David and the Prophets, who, by means of earthly images, oftentimes surpassingly sublime, bring down the truth from heaven to us, or seemingly raise us up to gaze upon it. Even in some of the discourses and parables of our Lord, the same mode of teaching is adopted. And, "if," said he to Nicodemus, "I have told you earthly things, (or have presented heavenly truths to your minds by means of earthly images,) and ye believe (and understand) not, how shall ye believe (and understand) if I tell you heavenly things (without the aid of earthly

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symbols)? " So, perhaps, it would be impossible to represent to our limited and finite understandings, with literal and scientific accuracy, the workings of the Emisary of Evil, as related to the great scheme of Divine Providence. Yet they may be susceptible of such poetic treatment and representation as shall convey all the essential truths needful for us to know, and so much as shall ever be in advance of our own knowledge, progress as much as we may. Poetry has been employed in all ages as a vehicle for the communication of the deepest truths. God takes the forms of poetry, as he does language itself in its simpler elements, and sanctifies them by employing them as instruments for enlightening and educating the human race. And when we study the histories contained in the word of God, we do so by the aid of principles and laws which assume their literal agreement with fact. But when we study the poetry of the Scriptures, we do not expect the same kind of verisimilitude. For example, when it is said that Jesus was baptized in Jordan by John, we pre-suppose its strict agreement with fact. But when it is said, "Except a man be born again," etc., we apply the very opposite principle, and assume literal inaccuracy for the purpose of finding a deeper spiritual truth. The book of Job belongs to the latter class rather than the former. It must be interpreted according to the laws and principles applied to the understanding of poetry, and not of prose.

In drawing these remarks to a close, we cannot refrain from presenting to our friends a very pertinent passage—a pearl for which Dr. Kitto dived, and which he brought up from the depths of pious old Caryl's cumbrous Commentary of Job: "This I say, God doeth here after the *manner* of men; for otherwise we are not to conceive that God doth make certain days of session with his creatures, wherein he doth call the good and bad angels together about the affairs of the world. We must not have such gross conceits of God; God is not moved by the slanders of Satan; but only Scripture speaks thus, to teach us how God carries himself in the affairs of the world, even *as if* he sat upon the throne, and called every creature before him, and gave each directions—to move in every action."

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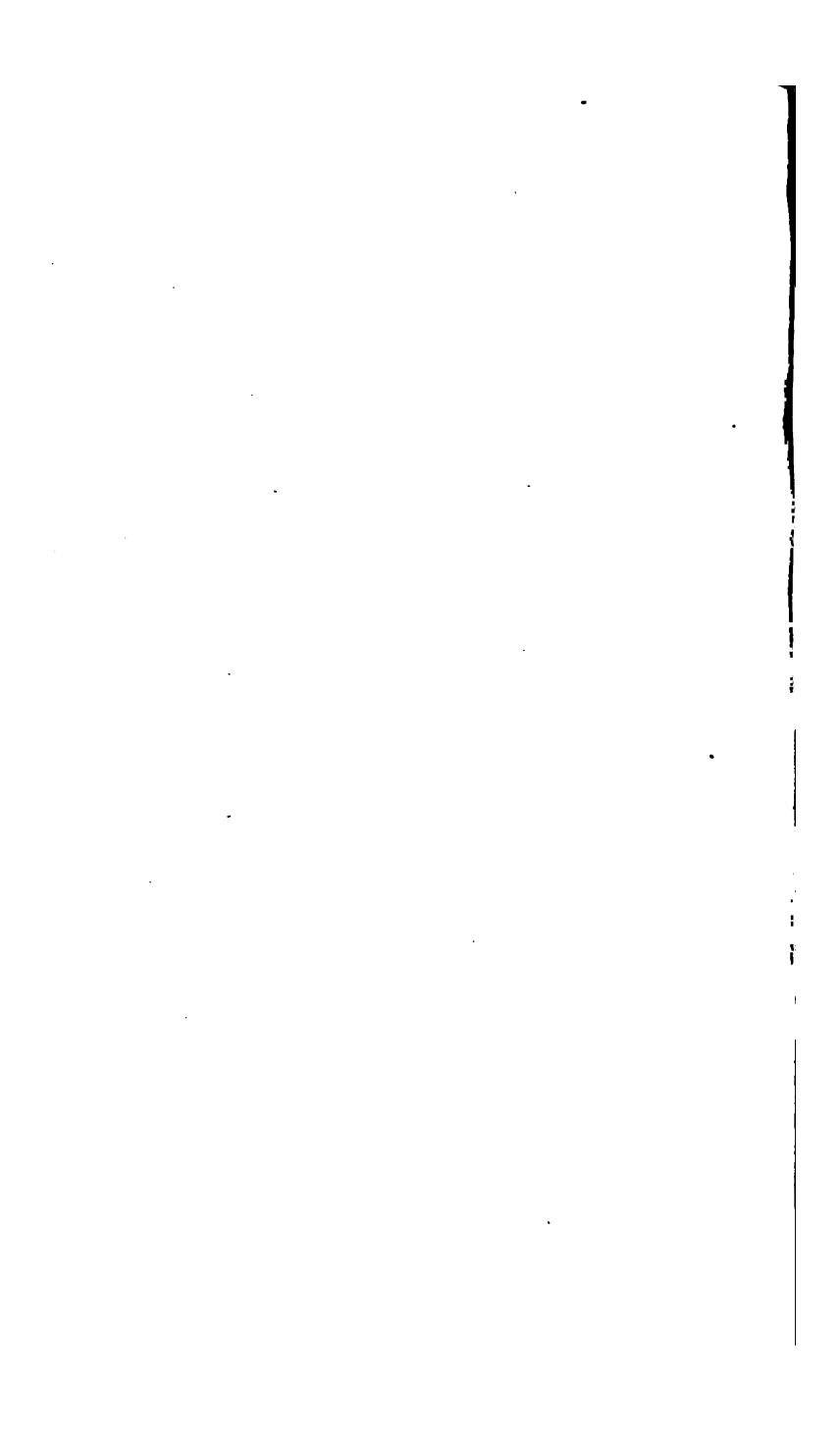
VOLUME THE FIFTH.

LONDON:

WILLIAM FREEMAN, 69, FLEET STREET.

1857.





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NEHEMIAH



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## NEHEMIAH AND HIS TIMES.

the high priest Jozadak, fifty thousand of the captives had returned to the city of their fathers, and had re-erected the temple on Mount Moriah. At this juncture Nehemiah, one of the most illustrious men of his time, appears upon the stage of Hebrew history. But, ere we review the circumstances of his life, it will be necessary to glance at the events connected with the rebuilding of the temple, and at the state of Jerusalem prior to his visiting it.

### THE STATE OF JERUSALEM.

According to a record found at Ecbatana, in the reign of Darius Hystaspes, Cyrus gave directions for the building of a temple twice the size of that of Solomon, the cost of which was to be paid out of the royal treasury.\* But either the treasurers neglected to execute their orders, or the Jews, out of modesty, did not choose fully to avail themselves of the monarch's favour; for, when the foundations of the building were laid, some of the older men, who had seen the former erection, perceived that it would be far inferior to it both in extent and beauty, and the voice of weeping mingled strangely with shouts of exultation, and "the noise was heard afar off."† The old men were sorrowful, but the young men rejoiced, and the excitement of both was manifested without restraint.

The foundations of the temple were laid in the year 536, B.C. But opposition arose. The Samaritans, a people of mixed descent, requested that they might be permitted to take part in the building of the house of God; but this could not be, for they were idolaters, and to have allowed them to have any share in the erection, would have been to desecrate the sacred edifice from the very commencement of its restoration. And how did they act when their request was denied? They "hired counsellors to frustrate the purpose" of the Jews; and in the reign of Ahasuerus‡ (Cambyses), and again in that of Artaxerxes§ (Smerdis), they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, and succeeded in preventing the progress of the work. Great must have been the grief of the colonists when they saw the temple just rising above its foundations and there stop; and many, doubtless, were the taunts which would be heaped upon them by their enemies, as they looked upon the unfinished work; but the

\* Ezra vi. 3, 4.    † Ezra iii. 8—13.    ‡ Ezra iv. 6.    § Ezra iv. 7.

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prophet had foretold that the temple should be built, and hence Zerubbabel and his coadjutors waited patiently until a brighter day should dawn.

And a brighter day did dawn. Smerdis (who was a usurper) having been slain, Darius Hystaspes, a mild and benevolent monarch, succeeded to the government of the Median empire, and "the time to favour Zion" once more drew on. Representations inimical to the interests of the Jews were made by Tatnai and Shethar-boznai, their enemies, to Darius also; but search being made, at their own suggestion, for the decree which the Jews said Cyrus had granted them, it was found in the house of the rolls at Achmetha (Ecbatana), and the adversaries of the colonists were themselves commanded by Darius to forward the work of the temple without delay, and to defray the expense out of the king's tribute money. Tatnai and Shethar-boznai being subject to the king's authority, did not dare to disobey; but, though greatly against their own inclinations, speedily set about the fulfilment of the royal wish. The hearts of kings are in the hand of God, and he it was who induced Darius to carry out the design of his predecessor Cyrus, and to issue a decree favourable to the Jews.\*

But many of the Jews were themselves half-hearted in the work. Whilst they erected "ceiled houses" for their own accommodation in Jerusalem, they allowed the house of God to lie waste, pretending that, as yet, the time to build it was not come.† The selfishness of the human heart is seldom at a loss for excuses for the neglect of duty, and men who are anxious to promote their own interests can easily find some specious reasons for neglecting the interests of the church of God. But at this juncture the voice of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah were heard among the people, urging and encouraging them to the prosecution of the enterprise. "I am with you,"‡ said the Lord God, by the mouth of the former. "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this house; his hands also shall finish it,"§ said he, by the latter. The temple accordingly rose, and was finished on the third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius.

And now what joy is experienced at Jerusalem! It is the feast of the dedication; and the people, filled with gratitude at beholding the city once more adorned with the sanctuary of

\* Ezra vi. 1—13. † Hag. i. 1—4. ‡ Hag. i. 13. § Zech. iv. 9.

the Lord, offer a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and, as a sin-offering for all Israel, twelve goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And the priests are set in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses; and on the tenth day of the month Nisan, the pass-over is kept, and, for seven days after, the feast of unleavened bread. What a scene of gladness must this have been! And among the most joyful would be Zerubbabel the governor, and Jeshua the high priest, who had led the people out of Babylon, and had shared with them the trials consequent on the opposition of their enemies. But, alas! attractive as the temple is, and fair and beautiful, it cannot be compared with the magnificent structure that stood upon the spot a century before. And the ark of the covenant, and the tables of the law, and the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the Shechinah, or glory of the Lord—where are they? They are all wanting; an indication of the fact that the original glory of the temple would not be restored until "the desire of all nations" should come, and sanctify it by his special presence.

But in Syria, or Palestine, a town without walls would, at this period especially, have been perilously insecure; and hence it is scarcely probable that the Jews would go on long erecting the temple, and building private houses, without also attending to the fortifications of the city. Accordingly, a wall was probably commenced, simultaneously, or nearly so, with the commencement of the temple, whence Ezra the priest, after the latter was finished, gave thanks unto God, who had given his people a reviving, to set up the house of God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and "to give them a wall in Judah and Jerusalem";\* in reference to which Josephus also observes: "Now at this time Sisinnus, the governor of Syria and Phœnicia, and Sathrabazanes, with certain others, came up to Jerusalem, and asked the rulers of the Jews by whose grant it was that they built the temple in this manner, since it was more like to a citadel than a temple? and for what reason it was that they built cloisters and walls, and those strong ones too, about the city?"†

We think it indubitable, then, that by the time the temple was finished, Jerusalem was again surrounded by a wall, and that it assumed something of its former character and aspect.

\* Ezra ix. 9.

† Antiq. xi. 4.

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There, on Mount Moriah, stood the sanctuary of the Most High, and in various parts of the city were streets and houses, some of the latter beautiful and spacious dwellings; whilst around the whole were fortifications, designed, as in former times, to protect the city from the incursions of surrounding tribes.

In the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes,\* whom the writer believes to have been Xerxes I, and the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, Ezra the priest, who had gone back to Babylon, returned to Jerusalem with a second colony of Jews, the king having issued a decree permitting all the people of Israel, with the priests and Levites, which "were minded of their own free-will," to accompany him. This colony was not large, for it probably did not exceed six thousand persons; but it was a considerable addition to the strength of the population of Jerusalem; and though the city was not in a very prosperous state until a somewhat later period, yet, we may suppose that after the reformation effected by Ezra,† the inhabitants enjoyed for a while a considerable degree of peace.

That peace must, however, have been of short duration, for in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (that is, as we shall see hereafter, of Artaxerxes Longimanus,) the colonists at Jerusalem were in great affliction and reproach, for the wall of the city had been broken down, and the gates burned with fire.‡ Under what circumstances, and by whose agency, this calamity had been brought about, the sacred narrative does not say; but during the early years of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, the empire, including Syria, was in a very unsettled state, and in the year 458 B.C., Megabysus, whom the king had sent with an army of three hundred thousand men against the Egyptians, revolted from his sovereign, and raised an army in Syria to oppose the forces of his own master.§ Was it by this army, aided by the Samaritans, that the walls of Jerusalem were broken down? It is not improbable; and here, as in many other instances, sacred and profane history throw light on each other.

## BABYLON AND PERSIA.

The king who sat upon the throne in the days of Nehemiah,

\* Ezra vii. 1—7. † Ezra ix. x. ‡ Neh. i. 3. § Diod. Siculus xi. 74.



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is called ARTAXERXES, or, as the name is otherwise written, ARTACHSHAST, a title given to several of the kings of Persia, signifying, in Greek, according to Herodotus, "a great warrior," with which meaning the Persian sense of the word agrees. As with regard to several of the Pharaohs of Egypt, so here also differences of opinion exist respecting the persons to whom this designation is given: but it is now generally believed that the Artaxerxes of Neh. ii. 1, was Artaxerxes Longimanus, the son and successor of the celebrated Xerxes. The following table exhibits the names of the kings of Persia from Cyrus to the close of Nehemiah's history, as given in the Scriptures, together with the corresponding names given by other historians:—

SCRIPTURE NAME.	HISTORICAL NAME.	B.C.
Cyrus . . . . .	Cyrus . . . . .	538
Ahasuerus (Ezra iv. 6) . . . . .	Cambyses . . . . .	522
Artaxerxes (Ezra iv. 7) . . . . .	Smerdis . . . . .	522
Darius (Ezra vi. 1) . . . . .	Darius Hystaspes . . . . .	521
Artaxerxes, or } (Ezra vii. 1) }	Xerxes I. . . . .	485
Ahasuerus } (Esther i. 1) }		
Artaxerxes (Neh. ii. 1) . . . . .	Artaxerxes Longimanus . . . . .	464
Artaxerxes (Neh. xii. 6) . . . . .	Darius Nothus . . . . .	423*

According to Plutarch, Artaxerxes Longimanus was so called because one of his arms was longer than the other, but, according to Strabo, and other writers, because both his arms were long, his fingers reaching, when he stood upright, to or below his knees. Norberg asserts, on the authority of native Persian historians, that his mother was a Jewess, which, if Xerxes was the Ahasuerus of the book of Esther, is highly probable. His father Xerxes, who had arrived at such a pitch of voluptuousness that he offered a reward to any one who would invent a new kind of pleasure, brought upon himself universal contempt, and was murdered by Artabanus, the commander of his life-guard, who, when he had accomplished his design, hastened to Artaxerxes, and told him that Darius, his brother, had murdered his father in order to obtain possession of the crown. Artaxerxes was thus induced to put Darius to death; and Artabanus, who himself aspired to the throne, then attempted to kill Artaxerxes. But the king defended himself

\* Two other kings sat upon the throne between Artaxerxes Longimanus and Darius Nothus, namely, Xerxes II, and Sogdianus; but they reigned only for a short period and are not mentioned in the sacred writings.

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nobly, slew Artabanus on the spot, and was thus established on the throne of Persia.\*

The kings of Persia resided, during the summer months of the year, at Ecbatana, or, as it was otherwise called, Achmetha, a city of Media, built, according to the description in the apocryphal book of Judith,† by Arphaxad, king of the Medes, but, according to Herodotus, founded by Dejoas. It is now represented by a town called Hamadan, which stands upon its site at the base of the Elward mountains, N. lat. 34° 53', E. long. 40°. It is probable that Mordecai and Esther died and were buried there, and a tomb exists at Hamadan, said to have been built over their graves by the pious Jews of Kashan, the original tomb having been destroyed when the city was sacked in the early Eastern wars.

But during the winter the court removed from Ecbatana to Shushan, a difference of climate between the two places rendering the change highly beneficial.‡ “The elevated position and more northern situation of Ecbatana rendered its summer comparatively cool and supportable, while the severity of its winter cold compelled a return to the mild region of the plain.”

Shushan is said to have been of Persian origin; but it is highly probable that a city existed in the district where it stood, and perhaps upon its immediate site, in the times of the kings of Babylon and Assyria. Among the sculptures recently discovered by Mr. Layard in the mounds at Koyunjik is a bas-relief, in which the conquest of Susiana, or Elymais, (anciently known by the name Nuvaki) by an Assyrian king called Assordanes, the son of Esarhaddon, is represented. Susa, or Shushan, stood in a district named Modaktu, and Mr. Layard thinks it highly probable that in this bas-relief there is a representation of that city. It “was surrounded,” he says, “by a wall, with equi-distant towers and gateways. The houses were flat-roofed, and some had one tower or upper chamber, and others two. They had no windows, and their doors were square,” etc.§

Respecting the site of Shushan, there are two opinions; some identifying it with the modern Shus, near the river Kerkhah, others with Shuster, which lies about 37 miles

\* Diod. Sic. xi. 18.

† Judith i. 2-4.

‡ Neh. i. 1; Esther i. 2-5.

§ “Nineveh and Babylon,” pp. 452, etc.

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further eastward, between the rivers Shapour and Dizful. On the former site there are numerous pyramidal mounds, in which it is said large blocks of marble, covered with hieroglyphics, have been found; and at the foot of the largest of these mounds is the reputed tomb of the prophet Daniel, which, however, is a small building of modern date, in which a few dervishes find shelter, and watch, as they say, the prophet's remains. The neighbourhood of Shuster has, however, superior claims to be regarded as the spot on which the city of Shushan stood. "There cannot, I think," says Mr. Layard, "be a doubt as to the position of Susa. The principal ruins are on the banks of the Shapúr; but supposing the account of the grandeur of Susa, furnished by the ancient historians, to be without exaggeration, the city itself, or its suburbs, may well have extended to the two rivers on either side."\* In several parts of the vicinity of Shuster are numerous ruins of different periods of time, but the most important are at the junction of the Abi Gargar and the Karun, extending about three miles along the canal, and being nearly nine miles in circumference. "I beheld with surprise," says Mr. Layard, "the vast foundations and solid masses of brick-work which were exposed in the banks of the canal, where the earth, undermined by the waters, has fallen in." It is probable that the city Shushan was improved and enlarged by the Persian kings, and especially by Darius Hystaspes, whence it became generally spoken of as of Persian origin.

Supposing this to be the site of the city, the Shapour or the Dizful, two branches of the Karun, will be the Ulai of the prophet Daniel,† and the Eulceus of the historian Pliny.‡ Pliny says that the kings of Persia would drink of no other water, and therefore carried with them a supply wherever they went. Shushan was about 200 miles in a direct line from Ecbatana, and about 250 miles from Babylon.

Here, then, Artaxerxes Longimanus held his court at the time of Nehemiah's first introduction to our notice. He dwelt in a beautiful and splendid palace, for the kings of Persia lived in a style of great magnificence, and were surrounded by numerous ministers and attendants. We learn from the

\* "Journal of the Royal Geographical Society," vol. xvi.

† Dan. viii. 2.

‡ Hist. Nat. vi. 31.

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book of Esther that there was at Shushan, the palace, a garden, within which a court was erected, having white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble; and that the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble. The ruins at Persepolis, of the Chebel Minar, or palace of forty columns, may be supposed to furnish some idea of the extent and grandeur of this court.

## NEHEMIAH AND HIS OFFICE.

It is probable that many Jews were connected with the court of Artaxerxes, but the most honoured amongst them was Nehemiah, the son of Hachaliah. Some have supposed that this Nehemiah was of the tribe of Levi, and of the family of the priest; but others, with greater probability, think that he was a descendant of the royal house of David. He is to be distinguished from another individual of the same name, who went up with Zerubbabel to Jerusalem: \* for that he was among the early colonists of the city there is no reason to suppose.

Nehemiah held the office of cup-bearer to the king. This office was one of great honour, the emoluments of which were considerable. It was the duty of the cup-bearer to wait upon the person of the king, and at banquets and entertainments to present to him the wine. This he did by pouring the wine into the cup in the most graceful manner, without spilling it, then dipping into it a smaller cup and tasting the wine, to assure the king that it was not poisoned; and afterwards, holding the cup on three fingers, handing it to the monarch, so that he might receive it in the most convenient manner possible. Whoever wished to have an interview with the king applied to the cup-bearer, who, if he thought proper, could deny him the privilege; if otherwise, he introduced him into the royal presence.†

But distinguished as the position of Nehemiah was, he did not forget his country and his people. Courtiers there are, who, surrounded with the pleasures of the world, and laden with its honours and its wealth, care not for their fellow-men, and are equally unmindful of their God; but Nehemiah

\* See Ezra ii. 2; and Neh. vii. 7.

† Herod. iii. 34; 7.

retained both his patriotism and his piety. Great, therefore, was his grief, when, through his brother Hanani and others, he heard of the sad state of things at Jerusalem. He sat down and wept and mourned certain days, and prayed unto the God of heaven. How beautiful was his prayer! It is left on record for our instruction, and is certainly a model worthy of imitation. It acknowledges the sovereignty and the faithfulness of God; it contains a confession of the nation's guilt; it looks back upon the promises made to the fathers; and it pleads for help in their season of distress.\* Who can doubt that it reached the throne of God, and that it influenced the events which subsequently occurred? The sad intelligence of the state of the city reached Nehemiah in the month Chisleu,† in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, or B.C. 444. The month Chisleu, or Kislev, was a winter month, answering to part of November and December, and the court remained at Shushan until the month Nisan or April. On one occasion, as Nehemiah was in the presence of the king, performing the honourable duties of his office, his countenance was sad, which, in the king's presence, it appears it had never before been; indeed, kings never like to see their courtiers depressed, and it is even said that in Persia a law existed forbidding any one to appear sorrowful when waiting on the sovereign. The sadness of the cup-bearer at once, therefore, attracted the king's notice, and he asked, "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." At being thus accosted, Nehemiah became alarmed, but he instantly replied, "Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lies waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?"‡

Who but a patriot could have ever uttered these words? Nehemiah's dejection arose indeed from sadness of heart; yet it was not on his own account that he sorrowed, but for his country and his countrymen. The city consecrated by the ashes of his fathers,—where lay not merely "the graves of a household," but the graves of many households, the graves of several generations—was in ruins, and their sepulchres were in danger of being sacrilegiously destroyed. Now, as a Jew, Nehemiah had been taught to respect even the dead of

\* Neh. i. 5—11.

† Neh. i. 1.

‡ Neh. ii. 3.

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his ancestors. It was sacred dust. It rested in the grave in hope. And could he then think of the desolation of the city, and of the danger consequent to the tombs of the kings, without concern? It was impossible. Piety always tends to promote respect for departed relatives, and few things are more revolting to the mind of a good man than to see the tomb of his fathers injured by the ruthless hand of the barbarian.

Artaxerxes probably sympathised with Nehemiah's sorrow, for the words appealed to a feeling resident in the king's own breast. Not the Jews only, but the Persians also, respected the ashes of the dead, and deemed sacred the spots where those ashes were interred. "For what dost thou make thy request?" said the king, therefore, to his cup-bearer; and Nehemiah "prayed to the God of heaven." It was a silent prayer—an ejaculation, uttered by the heart for guidance and direction; and guidance and direction were in a moment granted. "Send me," replied Nehemiah, "unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it." It was a bold request, but the king granted it; the queen, who was sitting by his side, and who had heard of Esther, if she had not known her, perhaps countenancing the patriotic wish; and a time was fixed during which Nehemiah should be absent, but at the expiration of which he should return to the court.

### NEHEMIAH'S MISSION.

And now, having received letters to the governors beyond the Euphrates, and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest in the mountains of Lebanon—the former directing that he was to be conveyed to Jerusalem, the latter that he was to receive timber for the gates of the palace and of the city walls—Nehemiah is on his journey to the place he holds so dear. Captains of the army and horsemen accompany him as an escort; and after travelling more than eight hundred miles, he arrives in safety at the city of his fathers. Deeply grieved are Sanballat and Tobiah when they hear that a man has come to seek the welfare of the children of Israel, and they are resolved, if possible, to frustrate the accomplishment of his designs. But Nehemiah acts deliberately and with caution; remaining in the city three days, and making his observations ere he discloses the purpose of his coming.

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And now it is night, and the inhabitants of the city generally are enjoying their repose. But the generous patriot is on the alert, and mounted on his mule, commences an examination of the city walls; the moon, as we may imagine, affording him sufficient light. Starting at the valley gate on the western side of the city, he proceeds to the gate of the fountain on the east, and to the king's pool; and finds, alas! that the wall is indeed in ruins, masses of stone and brick-work lying in all directions, so that he cannot find a spot where the animal he rides upon can pass. By the brook Kedron he takes a general survey of the whole of the eastern side, and then, turning back, re-enters the valley-gate and returns home.

What a night of intense interest to Nehemiah was that! Many, doubtless, were the sad reflections that crossed his mind during those few hours; and many were the prayers which he offered to the God of heaven. If he was sad when he heard of the desolation of the city, how much more so when he *saw* that desolation. But he had faith in God, without which, at such a juncture, his courage must have failed, and his enterprise have been abandoned in despair. For, in a work of difficulty, faith is everything.

"Never was a marvel done in earth but it had sprung of faith:  
Nothing noble, generous, or great, but faith was the root of the  
achievement;  
Nothing comely, nothing famous, but its praise is faith."

Nehemiah had authority from Artaxerxes to repair the ruins he beheld; his confidence, however, was not in man, but in the Lord Jehovah; and at length he revealed his purpose to the priests, the nobles, and the rulers of the Jews, and said, "Come, let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach."

The difficulties were great, but the people listened to him; and responding to his call, said with one consent, "Let us rise and build." So they strengthened their hands for this good work. Sanballat, a native of Horonaim beyond Jordan; Tobiah an Ammonite; and Geshem, an Arabian, who were probably governors of neighbouring districts under the satrap of Syria, having heard of their design, laughed them to scorn, and charged them with rebellion against the authority of the king. But Nehemiah answered them: "The God of heaven will

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prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build; but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial in Jerusalem."

It is often thus. There are Sanballats, and Tobiahs, and Geshems in every age of the church. When had not the builders of Jerusalem to contend with them? When did any great and noble enterprise not meet with powerful opposition? Not on this account, then, must the patriot or the philanthropist lay aside his plans. That were unworthy of him. That were cowardly. No! let him brave opposition and be determined to overcome it. Courage is essential to him, and courage will triumph over multitudes of foes. If he hesitate, he is beaten. If he proceed, he gains the conquest.

Every one must admire the heroism of Nehemiah. Some men would have been cowed by the opposition of Sanballat, but Nehemiah was a man of another spirit. He knew the influence which his enemies possessed, and he knew that their hatred to his people was intense; but he knew also, as did the prophets before him—as did such men as Elijah and Elisha—that God was on his side, and he had probably heard of the prediction of Daniel, "The street shall be built again, and the wall in troublous times;" and hence he boldly resisted his adversaries, and set about the work he was destined to accomplish.

### THE WALL REBUILT.

In a few days, Jerusalem presented a most active scene. Already had the letter of Artaxerxes been delivered to the keeper of the forest, and already had the timber requisite for the gates begun to arrive; whilst Nehemiah, having secured the co-operation of many of the rulers of the people, had appointed to different companies different parts of the wall. And now the work has commenced in earnest; and around the entire city there is the utmost animation and joy. Let us imagine a spectator standing on the Temple mount, where with little difficulty he might survey the scene, and where probably Nehemiah himself often stood as the work of building was carried on. Directing his attention eastward, he would observe the priests, with Eliashib the high priest at their head, working at the sheep-gate, near the sheep-pool, the sacredness of their office being no barrier to their engaging in an enterprise so good as this. Next to them, our sp



would perceive the men of Jericho employed, and, beyond them, a company under the direction of Zaccur, the son of Imri. At the fish-gate, on the north-east corner, whither fish from the sea of Galilee was brought up for sale, he would observe the sons of Hassinaah at work, and next to them Meremoth, Meshullam, and Zadok, with their several companies; after whom he would see the Tekoites, a family of Tekoa, which was situated south of Bethlehem, employed. But our spectator perceives, even at a distance, that there is something wanting here; and, drawing near to the spot, he finds that none of the nobles of the Tekoites are putting their necks to the work of the Lord. How is this? Are they afraid? Are they indolent? Not unfrequently, when there is work to do of more than ordinary difficulty, are great men found shrinking from the task; yet they are not exempt from their share in the enterprise; and if Meroz was cursed by the angel of the Lord because he came not up to the help of the Lord—to the help of the Lord against the mighty—these idlers, surely, are in danger of a similar visitation.

But our supposed observer leaves these Tekoites, and standing again on some elevated spot, he observes the old gate on the north in a state of restoration; and here Jehoiada the son of Paseah, and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah, direct the work. Then he perceives the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah employed, and after them Uzziel at the head of some of the goldsmiths, and Hananiah at the head of a company of apothecaries; for goldsmiths, apothecaries, and men of all other trades, have now laid aside their work, and become, for a while, carpenters and masons. Then here are Rephaiah, and Jedaiah, and Malchijah, and Hashub, each at work with his company of men; and here is Shallum, one of the rulers of the city, actively employed, together with his daughters, whose zeal is such that even they submit to manual labour and to arduous toil. Noble women! Not without its lessons is this little fact, nor is it mentioned without an object. Even females may lend a helping hand in building up Jerusalem, nor are their efforts to be despised by any means, but strengthened and encouraged by every friend of man.

On the west side of the city is the valley gate, and here the spectator finds Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah, one of the towns of Judah, employed. A thousand cubits from this

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gate, on the south side, is the dung gate, whence the dung is carried out and thrown into the valley of Hinnom, and here Malchiah directs the work. A little further is the gate of the fountain, near the king's pool, or the pool of Siloah, by the king's garden, and here Shallun, the son of Col-hozeh, is the overseer. Next to him repairs Nehemiah, the son of Azbuk, then the Levites under Rehum; and next to him Hashabiah, Bavai, Ezer, Barnuch, and Meremoth are employed. After these are observed other priests, and against the water-gate, on the east side, are the Nethinims, a class of people who were servants to the Levites; and then beyond them are the goldsmiths and the merchants.\*

The circumference of the city, according to Josephus, was thirty-three stadia, or nearly three geographical miles; but it is impossible to ascertain whether the wall built by Nehemiah was so extensive as this. It is probable, however, that it did not shut out Mount Zion, as the present wall does, but included it; and, from the circumstances of the case, we must conceive that Nehemiah's wall was an outer one, which was strengthened by other erections at a later period. The gates in it appear to have been ten, a larger number than in modern times would be considered safe. But Thebes, in Egypt, had its hundred gates, and the easterns generally did not entertain the objections to gates which are held by us.

The building or repairing of the wall was effected in fifty-two days. During this time the enemies of the Jews were not inactive, but sought to prevent the accomplishment of the design to the utmost of their power. Sanballat was indignant, and said, "What do these feeble Jews?" Tobiah mocked and said, "That even if a fox went over the wall he would break it down." But Nehemiah, who heard these sarcasms, made his appeal to the God of heaven, and the people having a mind to work, the wall still rose. Little need those who are engaged in any noble enterprise care for the taunts and scoffs of their opponents. Men will often sneer because they can do nothing else, and their very sneers are, therefore, proofs of their imbecility and folly. Let those who have undertaken any worthy task, prosecute it fearlessly, whether men praise them or deride.

\* See Neh. iii. and compare chap. xii. We have given above the substance of the account, omitting only a few names.

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But the opposition became more formidable. When Sanballat and his coadjutors saw that the breaches in the wall were made up, and that the work of the Jews was likely to succeed, they formed a conspiracy to come upon the builders unawares, and slay them. This, to say the least, was mean and cowardly, and it met only with the defeat which it deserved. Nehemiah encouraged the people, and God brought the stratagems of their enemies to nought. Yet the Jews were under the necessity of arming themselves. "They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded."

Living, as we do, in a land of peace, we can scarcely realise to ourselves such a scene as this; but in the east such scenes are not uncommon, even in the present day. "We have seen men," says Dr. Kitto, "following the plough with guns slung to their backs, and swords by their sides; or else these and other weapons were placed within reach, while they pursued such labours as kept them stationary." What, however, if the builders were attacked in one particular spot! Could the few defend themselves against the many? The work was spread over a considerable area, and the forces of Sanballat might have come upon a company of labourers on one side of the city, whilst those on another side knew nothing of it.

Yes; but observe, there is Nehemiah himself with a trumpet by his side, now in one place, and now in another; and it is already understood by the rulers of the people that the sounding of the trumpet is the signal of danger. The moment, therefore, that the blast is heard, all rush to the spot whence the sound proceeds, and, God fighting for the people, the foe is driven back. In the night, too, guards are set; and such is the ardour of Nehemiah and his brethren, that, save for the purpose of washing them, they never put off their clothes.

Can we wonder that success should crown an enterprise so earnestly pursued? If ever a people were placed in circumstances calculated to discourage them and to quench their zeal, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, at this juncture, were that people. And but for the energy, confidence, and patriotism of one man, the work would, in all probability, have failed. Nehemiah

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was the presiding genius of the whole, and Nehemiah's advice inspired his countrymen, and nerved them with vigour adequate to the task.

### USURY REBUKED—THE LIBERALITY OF NEHEMIAH—HIS CONSTANCY AND HIS COURAGE.

By the law of Moses, the Israelites were forbidden to lend money to the poor on interest. With the rich, and with strangers, they might trade in this way; but against taking advantage of the indigent, this regulation was enacted: "If thou lend money to buy off my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him an usual creditor, neither shalt thou lay upon him interest."\* This law had been placed in abeyance by many of the Jews at Jerusalem, prior to Nehemiah's visit to the city; for some of the nobles and rulers had exacted money and corn, and had even taken lands, and vineyards, and houses, of the poorer class of the people, as interest for food supplied to them in the time of dearth, and for money lent to them to pay tribute to the king. The consequence was, "a great cry" was heard in the city, for the people began to feel the effect of the position in which they had been placed. What amount of interest was exacted of them does not appear, for, though a "hundredth part" is mentioned, it is not said whether this was a monthly or an annual interest; but whatever the amount was, the conduct of the nobles was a direct violation of the Mosaic law.

Hence, when Nehemiah heard of it, he was very angry, and, probably in a large assembly, he rebuked the nobles and the rulers, and demanded that they should restore to the people whatever property had been mortgaged, together with the interest which had been taken from them, whether in money, in corn, in wine, or in oil. The nobles agreed to this requirement, and even took an oath that they would restore to every man his own; on which Nehemiah shook his lap, and said, "So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise; even thus be he shaken out and emptied."† But the promise was fulfilled, and there was great thankfulness and joy among the people.

\* Exod. xxii. 25. The English version has "usurer," and "usury": but the Hebrew word signifies merely "interest," and is from a root bite like a serpent." Comp. Psa. xv. 5; Ezek. xviii. 8, 17

† Neh. v. 1—13.

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In another way was Nehemiah a benefactor to his countrymen. The former governors of the city had exacted money of the people, and bread, and wine; and even the servants of those governors had greatly oppressed them; but for twelve years Nehemiah discharged the duties of his office without any remuneration; \* whilst at his table a hundred and fifty persons sat down daily, besides many of the heathen that were round about them. One ox and six choice sheep were slaughtered for his guests every day; and in addition to these, fowls were prepared, and every ten days, a store of all kinds of wine was laid in; yet, because the people were in considerable difficulties, the generous patriot required nothing in return, but freely gave these supplies for the general benefit of the city. Compared with the provisions of Solomon's household—which consisted daily in “thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl” †—Nehemiah's table was small; but then Solomon was a king, whilst Nehemiah was only a governor. He must, however, have accumulated considerable wealth; and there is no doubt, indeed, that the emoluments of his office in the court of Artaxerxes were very large. He might, however, have kept his property to himself; but he was a patriotic and large-hearted man, and no doubt felt that to hoard his money whilst his country stood in need of help, would have been to sin, not against his country only, but against the providence of God.

How striking must have been the scene witnessed every day, during the erection of the wall, at Nehemiah's residence! Ere the toils of the day began, and again when the toils of the day were over, was this company of a hundred and fifty persons—the individuals, probably, who were under Nehemiah's more immediate direction and control—seen sitting down at the well-spread board, with their generous benefactor at their head, whilst stragglers too, belonging to other nations, who happened to be within the city, were permitted to share in Nehemiah's liberality. Yet none of his numerous guests would be so happy on these occasions as Nehemiah himself.

\* Neh. v. 14. etc. One of his titles was “the governor,” another “the tirshatha,” which is said to be a Persian word signifying “stern,” or “severe.”

† 1 Kings iv, 21, 23.

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There are joyous feelings connected with efforts to promote the happiness of others, to which the parsimonious and the covetous are utter strangers. Look at that Christian nobleman, who, residing in the midst of a rural population, or among a number of hard-working and industrious manufacturers, and who now and then generously provides them an ample repast; and mark how, amidst the smiles and the blessings he has flung around him, and which appear on the countenances of the assembled company, his own countenance is lit up with pleasure and satisfaction—the pleasure and satisfaction which spring from doing good to his fellow-men. Let the man who would experience some of the highest enjoyments of which our nature is susceptible, cultivate a generous spirit, and put forth well-directed efforts to increase the happiness of others, and such enjoyments he will doubtless feel.

But now the wall is finished, and all that remains is to set up the doors upon the gates. Sanballat and Geshem, hearing of this, now sought to effect by stratagem what they had tried to effect openly in vain. They sent to Nehemiah, saying, "Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages of the plain of Ono."\* Where the plain of Ono was, it is of little consequence to inquire; but it is evident that a plot was now forming against Nehemiah, and that the design of his enemies was, under the guise of friendship, to get possession of his person, and perhaps to take away his life. Could they have accomplished this, far as the work had advanced towards completion, they probably thought that they should still be able to prevent its full success; for without doors upon the gateways, the city would still be open to assault. How magnanimous was the patriot's reply: "I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down to you: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"†

One feature in Nehemiah's character, his determination of purpose, may be observed through the whole of his history; and here it comes out with peculiar prominence. He felt that he had one great task before him, and from the accomplishment of that task he was not by any considerations to be turned aside. Whether men frowned upon him or smiled, he was bent on the fulfilment of his important mission.†

\* Neh. vi. 2.

† Neh.

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was an arduous one, but he suffered nothing to daunt his courage, to alter his purpose, or to thwart his plans. Nor did he fear the face of his enemies, or shrink for the dangers connected with his position. Another snare was laid for him, and in this instance by some of his own people. He had gone into the house of Shemaiah, who probably professed to be a prophet, and who was "shut up," as if afraid that the adversaries of the Jews would take away his life; but he was a false friend to Nehemiah, and under the pretence that it was not safe for them to converse together in the house, he proposed that they should go into the temple and shut the doors; "for," said he, "they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night they will come to slay thee." But Nehemiah saw through the craftiness of the foe, and courageously replied, "Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life. I will not go in."\* What a noble sentiment! what genuine heroism! Tobiah and Sanballat had hired this man to pronounce a false prophecy respecting Nehemiah, and to put him in fear, with a view, no doubt, to weaken his purpose, and to stop the progress of the work. But his fortitude and courage frustrated the design, for he could not be induced to adopt any plan, even to save his own life, which would imply distrust in the providence of God.

How formidable is the man who does one thing, and whose determination and courage no foes can shake! Some there are who enter upon great enterprises ere they have counted the cost, and without the moral heroism essential to their accomplishment. Hence, almost as soon as any extraordinary and unforeseen difficulties arise, they hesitate, they fear, they give up the task. Need we say that these are not the men who will prove benefactors to the world? The world wants, as it has ever wanted, men of firm purpose and of holy courage; and never were such men wanted more than they are now. For the age we live in, the weak, the timid, and the unstable, are altogether unfit; and far better were it both for society and for themselves would they but stand out of the way, and make room for others better qualified than themselves. Every Christian, however, ought to possess the spirit of Nehemiah, for he "has a great work to do," if it be only

\* Neh. vi. 11.

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that of securing his own salvation ; and decision and fortitude are essential here.

### THE WALL COMPLETED—ITS SOLEMN DEDICATION—THE READING OF THE LAW AND THE ORIGIN OF THE SYNAGOGUE.

Nehemiah's more immediate task, the erection of the wall, was now accomplished. To the great vexation of the enemies of the Jews, and in spite of all their plans and stratagems, even the doors were set up on the gates, and the entire city was again enclosed. Porters and other officers were appointed; and to Hanani, the brother of Nehemiah, and Hananiah, the ruler of the palace, a general charge over Jerusalem was given. During the night the gates of the city were carefully shut and guarded, and they were not opened in the morning until the sun was hot; whilst the inhabitants generally were required to watch their own dwellings. For the city was large and the people few, and hence they were probably in danger, even after the wall was built, of being molested by their enemies, as well as by wanderers belonging to numerous surrounding tribes.

It appears to have been customary among the ancients to consecrate the walls of their cities to the gods, whence Ovid describes the dedication which took place when Romulus laid the foundations of the walls of Rome. The wall thus erected round Jerusalem by Nehemiah and his coadjutors was solemnly dedicated to the Lord Jehovah; an event which some suppose to have taken place during Nehemiah's second governorship of the city, but which no doubt occurred soon after the wall was finished, and prior to his return to the court of Persia. It was a day of great rejoicing in Jerusalem, so much so that the voice of thanksgiving was heard afar off. The Levites were gathered together with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, and the sons of the singers, who chanted the psalms in their temple services, came out of the country round about; and Nehemiah appointed two great companies, with the princes of Judah, to perambulate the walls with music and with singing. The one company, led by Ezra the scribe, the priests' sons bearing trumpets, and some of the princes, musical instruments such as David used, ascended the wall on the right hand towards the dung gate, and at the fountain gate by the stair-



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of the city of David; whilst the other company ascended beyond the tower of the furnaces, from above the gate of Ephraim, and at several other points, Nehemiah himself following them. Proceeding in opposite directions, the two companies performed the circuit of the wall and met at the temple, when "the singers sang aloud," Jezrahiah the overseer leading the triumphant strain. Numerous sacrifices too were offered on that day, and in the joy which God's goodness to his people had occasioned the women and the children shared.\*

But the wall thus finished, other work lay before the patriot Nehemiah, and other measures were adopted by him for the public good. The inhabitants of the city were too few to ensure its safety and prosperity; and Nehemiah having found the registry of those who first came up, and obtained from them contributions for the temple service, himself contributing a very large sum, afterwards induced the people to bring one person of every ten, to be chosen by lot, out of the other cities and towns of Judea to dwell at Jerusalem. This plan was adopted, and many offered to come voluntarily, so that the population of the city received an accession of several hundred men.†

But let us mark *this* scene especially. The people are gathered together as one man in the street which is before the water gate, and here is the venerable Ezra, having in his hand the book or roll of the law of Moses. It is the first day of the month Tisri, and from morning until noon he reads before the people, from a pulpit of wood, portions of the law, all the congregation standing up to hear. The occasion is a solemn one. Many have forgotten the requirements of the law, and some, perhaps, have never heard it read before. To its impressive words they listen, therefore, with fixed attention, and they lift up their hands, and bow their heads, and worship the Lord with their faces to the ground.

There were some present, however, on this occasion, who could not understand the words read. The law was written in the ancient Hebrew language; but many of those who listened to Ezra had been born in Babylon, and had learnt to speak the Chaldaic tongue, which, though a Semitic

\* Neh. xii. 27—43. It is probable that Psalms 147 to 150 were composed and sung on this occasion. See Hengstenberg on the Psalms, vol. iii. Clark.

† Neh. vii. 4. and xi. 1, 2.

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dialect, and therefore allied to the ancient Hebrew, differed from it considerably. Indeed, the Aramaic language, of which the Chaldee was a part, was now the language generally spoken by the Jews, so that probably to the greater part of the congregation the words read by Ezra were strange and new. What then was done? The priests and Levites, who were acquainted with both the languages, "read distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused the people to understand the reading." Six of them stood at Ezra's right hand, and seven at his left, and rendered the law, sentence by sentence, into Chaldee, so that all the congregation comprehended the import of the words. The immediate effect was deep sorrow; for "all the people wept when they heard the words of the law," for they perceived that it had been seriously transgressed, and were probably afraid that its penalties would be imposed on them. But Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites, bade them not to mourn or weep, for it was a holy day unto the Lord, and a day for thankfulness and praise. Tears did not become the feast of trumpets—the first day of the month Tisri, which was the first day of the civil year. "Go your way," said Nehemiah, therefore, to the people at mid-day, "eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

In this public reading of the law we find the model and probably the origin of the Jewish synagogue. No synagogues existed prior to the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, for copies of the law were then very scarce; and as the service of the synagogue consisted chiefly in the reading of the law, where there was no copy of the law there would be no synagogue. But now the synagogue was established, and, from this period of Jewish history it became customary for the people to assemble, at certain seasons, for the purpose of having the law read and expounded, sometimes in the open air, but frequently in buildings erected for the purpose. The rule was that a synagogue should be erected in every place where there were ten persons of full age always at leisure to attend the

\* The word "synagogue" signifies "an assembly" or model of the synagogue, not of the temple, is founded there on the whole subject Prideaux's "Connection," book "Synagogue and the Church."

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### THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES CELEBRATED—A SOLEMN FAST— THE SEALING OF THE COVENANT.

Another animating scene invites our attention. The people have found it written in the law that in the seventh month they should dwell in booths, in commemoration of the fact that their fathers dwelt in booths when God delivered them out of the land of Egypt. A proclamation is now made, therefore, both through Jerusalem and through other cities, that the inhabitants shall prepare for the celebration of this feast of tabernacles. And now multitudes go forth to the Mount of Olives, and fetch home olive, pine, myrtle, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees; and in the streets, and courts, and upon the flat roofs of their houses, erect booths to dwell in; and the feast is kept for seven days. On the eighth day there is a solemn convocation, and burnt sacrifices are offered as the law prescribes, and the whole season is one of great gladness, for it is the first celebration of the feast since the days of Joshua the son of Nun.\*

But the feast is followed by a fast. This well accorded with the position in which the people stood; and indeed alternate seasons of joy and of sorrow are common to man in almost every age and place. To nations and communities also, as well as to individuals, days of gladness are often succeeded by days of mourning and distress, for the history of the human race is a singularly chequered one, and Providence would teach us that we are in a state of trial or probation. On the twenty-fourth day of the month in which they kept the feast of tabernacles, the children of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and, clothed in sackcloth, stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. One fourth part of the day was spent in having the law read by the Levites, and another fourth part in confessing their transgressions before the Lord. But confession having been made, the Levites commanded them to stand up and offer praise to God; and in the sublime and beautiful language of the ninth chapter of the book of Nehemiah, in which the history of the nation from the days of Abraham is sketched, the incense of praise rose to heaven, together with earnest supplications for divine grace and mercy. And then a solemn covenant was

\* Neh. viii. 14—18, and compare Lev. xxiii. 39, 40, and Numb. xxix. 35.

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made by the people, which was written out and sealed, that they would observe all the commandments and statutes of the Lord ; and the sacred rites of the temple were renewed, and the first-fruits and other offerings were brought into the house of God.

All these events appear to have taken place prior to Nehemiah's return to the court, and he and Ezra were the chief instruments in bringing about a state of things so happy and delightful. Now Jerusalem was defended from her enemies ; now she was the scene of holy worship ; and now it was said again, as it had been said in previous times, " Walk about Zion, and go round about her ; tell the towers thereof ; mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever ; he will be our guide even unto death." To Ezra the nation was indebted for the completion of the canon of the Old Testament Scriptures ; whilst in 2 Macc. ii. 13 there are ascribed to Nehemiah the founding of a library, and the gathering together of the acts of the kings, and of the writings of David and the prophets. Heroic and devoted men ! what a debt of gratitude does the church of God owe to your memories and names. We, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, are reaping the fruit of your fidelity and toil. Your work lives, though empires have arisen and been swept away ; and it shall live, long as the word of God, long as time shall last.

It was about this period that Herodotus, the father of history, flourished ; and a little after the time of Nehemiah's restoration of the walls of Jerusalem, he travelled through Judea, and probably visited the metropolis itself, which he compared to Sardis, the capital of Lydia, in Asia Minor, at that time a city of considerable importance. We may infer, then, that Jerusalem had now assumed something of its former beauty, and had become celebrated in the estimation of surrounding nations. It had long sat solitary, and the prophets had mourned at the sight of its desolation ; but it had now risen from its ashes, and could Jeremiah, who saw it in its ruins, have seen it now, he would have sung, not in the plaintive strains of the book of Lamentations, but in the joyful notes of the 126th Psalm.

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### NEHEMIAH'S RETURN TO THE PERSIAN COURT—CON- TEMPORARY EVENTS.

The term for which Nehemiah had permission from Artaxerxes to remain at Jerusalem has now expired, and, according to his promise, he must now, therefore, return to the monarch's court. Twelve years had elapsed since he came to Jerusalem, and during that period a complete change had been effected both in its outward and in its moral character; and now the illustrious patriot probably thought that he might safely leave the hallowed spot in charge of his brother Hanani, and of Hananiah the ruler, whom he had already appointed to watch over its interests. It is probable that Ezra was now no more, for, according to Josephus, he died soon after the celebration of the feast of tabernacles, in a good old age, and was buried at Jerusalem with great magnificence.\* His death would be greatly felt, and his loss at this juncture must have been deplored by all his countrymen.

We may be permitted to imagine Nehemiah taking his leave of the holy city. He would probably pass through one of the gates on the eastern side of the wall, accompanied by an escort, and perhaps attended for a little way by his brother Hanani, and other friends. And now let us suppose that the company has ascended the Mount of Olives, and that the generous patriot turns round to take a farewell look of "the city of his fathers' sepulchres." Of what emotions is he now the subject! With what gratitude and joy does he contemplate the scene! When, twelve years before, he drew nigh to that city, its walls were in ruins; now, they stood around it without a breach. Then, the enemies of the Jews were exulting over them and threatening their destruction; now, they were defeated and silenced. Then, the inhabitants of the city were themselves in a state of considerable gloom and darkness; now, "the light of the law" had been poured upon their minds, and the solemn rites of their religion had been re-established. "Think upon me, O my God, for good, according to all that I have done for the people," is now again the prayer of the devoted Nehemiah, and he lingers on the spot, unwilling to depart from the scene of so many conflicts and triumphs.

But go he must, though he knows not whether he will

\* Antiq. xi. 5.

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ever be permitted to return; and bidding adieu to his brother and his friends, to whom he commits the charge of the city, he bends his way eastward, and crossing the Jordan, perhaps where Joshua and the tribes of Israel crossed it several centuries before, he pursues his course to the city Shushan, where probably Artaxerxes the king now held his court.

The return of Nehemiah to the court of Persia occurred in the year 432 B.C., which was the thirty-second year of the reign of Artaxerxes. Of his reception by the king, and of his personal history whilst he remained in Persia, we know nothing, so that we may here pause, and devote a paragraph or two to some events contemporary with this period of Jewish history.

It was during the earlier part of the reign of Artaxerxes that the war between the Persians and the Egyptians took place, in which the Athenians also were involved, and which resulted in the defeat of the Persians, both by land and sea. In the year 431 B.C. the Peloponnesian war (of which Thucydides has left such a graphic history) began, during which the Lacedemonians and the Athenians often sent ambassadors to the Persian court to solicit aid, though in vain. The horrors of this war were greatly increased by a dreadful plague, which at this time overran a considerable part of the world. Commencing in Ethiopia, it spread through Libya and Egypt and thence through India, Phœnicia, and Syria, whence again it diffused its ravages through the whole of the Persian empire, and then passed into Greece. Among its numerous victims was the celebrated Pericles, one of the most illustrious men of the Athenian republic, and for many years its principal support. Hippocrates the physician, who lived at this time, was invited by Artaxerxes to come into Persia to cure the soldiers infected with the plague; but the promise of a great reward could not induce him to leave his countrymen, the Grecians, to assist foreigners.

In the year 424 B.C., and in the forty-first year of his reign, Artaxerxes Longimanus died, when his son Xerxes II. ascended the throne of Persia, but in forty-five days was assassinated by Sogdianus, a son of Artaxerxes by a concubine. Sogdianus, however, reigned little more than six months. For his brother Ochus, or Darius Nothus (as he was the Greeks) having entered Persia with an army

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the death of Xerxes, was welcomed by the nobility of the land, and immediately proclaimed king. Sogdianus then submitted to Ochus, who, after having promised to pardon him, put him to a cruel death by suffocating him in ashes. A high tower was partly filled with ashes, and from the top the victim was cast into the midst of them, while the ashes were thrown around him by a wheel, until he died.\*

Darius Nothus occupied the throne nineteen years, but his reign was one of turbulence and strife. Many were the insurrections he had to quell, and many the conflicts in which he was engaged. Our limits will not, however, permit us to relate them, and we must proceed therefore to glance at the latter portion of Nehemiah's history, and so conclude our task.

### NEHEMIAH'S SECOND ADMINISTRATION.

"After certain days," or, "at the end of the days," Nehemiah obtained leave of the king to visit the city of Jerusalem again. Differences of opinion exist respecting the date of this event, some thinking that it occurred the year after his return to Persia, and others dating it twenty years after. The former opinion is certainly erroneous, as during so short a period as twelve months the abuses which he found in the city could scarcely have arisen. On the other hand, twenty years appear much too long; and hence some limit his stay in Persia to eight or nine years, in which case his return to Jerusalem took place, not in the reign of Darius Nothus, as Prideaux and Jahn suppose, but just prior to the death of Artaxerxes Longimanus.

Deep was the grief of this true patriot, on his arrival in the city, to find abuses of a very fearful character. It had been found written in the law of Moses, that the Moabite and the Ammonite should not come into the congregation of God's people for ever, because, when the Israelites came out of Egypt, they treated them unkindly, and hired Balaam to curse them. But Eliashib, the high priest—the man who ought to have been the last to violate the law, and the first to maintain the purity of the city—had entered into an alliance with Tobiah the Ammonite; and one of the first indications of corrupt practices which Nehemiah beheld on his return to Jerusalem was the appropriation of a large chamber, formerly

\* See 2 Macc. xiii. 4—6.

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used for the reception of the meat-offerings, the frankincense, the corn, and other articles used in the temple service, to the use of Tobiah and his family. Filled with indignation, Nehemiah threw out the household stuff of Tobiah into the open street, and, having had the chamber cleansed, brought in again the sacred vessels and stores. He then contended with the rulers, because the Levites had not received their portion of the tithes, and had been compelled, therefore, to fly to the fields; and he gathered them together, restored them to their place, and induced the tribe of Judah to bring in the tithes to the treasuries, appointing at the same time treasurers over them—men whom he could trust with the work of distributing to their brethren.

But how was it that he met with no opposition? Opposition he probably did encounter; but men who are conscious that they are in error, are seldom able to resist the efforts of a sturdy reformer, such as Nehemiah was. They quail before him, even as did the buyers and sellers in the courts of the temple before the Son of Man, when with a scourge he drove them out, and overthrew their tables and their seats.

Another abuse Nehemiah had to rectify. The Sabbath had been violated. He found some treading in the winepresses, some bringing in sheaves and lading asses, and some selling victuals, on the Sabbath day. There were also in Jerusalem, men of Tyre; and these Tyrians, who were eminently a commercial people, brought fish and all kinds of ware, probably "emeralds, purple, and brodered work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate,"\* in which they trafficked with the inhabitants on the Sabbath day. This abuse, also, Nehemiah boldly opposed. He rebuked the nobles of Judah, and commanded that during the whole of the Sabbath the gates of the city should be closed, so that no burden might be brought in during the day which God had sanctified to rest. Once or twice, however, the Tyrian merchants lodged outside the walls of the city, hoping perhaps to be able to carry on their trade there; but Nehemiah threatened to lay hands upon them, if they persisted in this violation of Hebrew law.

It were well if a little more regard to the sacredness of the Sabbath characterized the rulers of the British nation. For

\* See Ezek. xvii. 16.



when was the law of the Sabbath repealed? The day is changed from the seventh day to the first, but that is immaterial, and in no way affects the institution itself. We admit that the strictness with which the Jews observed the Sabbath cannot be enforced; but to make the day, as some would, a day of pleasure, of excursions, and of sight-seeing, would be to sweep away its sacredness at once, and to open the flood-gates of impiety and ungodliness, which would speedily overrun the land. Let the innovators of the Sabbath beware, and let its friends and advocates resist every effort which those innovators would make on its peacefulness and quiet. "Shall we bring more wrath upon" the land "by profaning the Sabbath?" God forbid. It is desecrated already to a fearful extent, and any further violation of it would, we are persuaded, be attended with many social evils.

One other act of reformation was performed by Nehemiah. Several of the Jews had contracted matrimonial alliances with the Ammonites and Moabites, and that although they had previously sworn that they would not give their daughters unto the people of the land, nor take their daughters for their sons.\* This was a crying evil, for it was directly at variance with the law of Moses, which commanded the Israelites to make no covenant with the inhabitants of Canaan; hence Nehemiah lifted up his voice against this evil also, and reminded the people that it was by means of strange women that Solomon the king of Israel was led away from the paths of piety and religion.

It is always a dangerous thing for the servants of God to ally themselves so closely with the irreligious; and to the young, who may peruse these pages, we would say—pause ere you contract a relationship of this kind, for the happiness of married life depends, to a considerable extent, on oneness of mind between the contracting parties in regard to the service of the Lord; and "how can two walk together unless they be agreed?"

Among those Jews who were guilty in this matter, was no less a person than the son of Joiada the high priest, who had married the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, the great opponent of Ezra and Nehemiah. Joiada succeeded his father Eliashib in the priesthood, in the year B.C. 413, so that

\* Neh. xiii. 23, 24; x. 30.

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this event—the marriage of his son with the daughter of Sanballat—must have occurred towards the end of Nehemiah's life. But though now probably between sixty and seventy years of age, he was the same intrepid reprover of sin, and he chased away from him the son of Joiada, because he had defiled the priesthood.\*

But now his life was drawing near its close. He continued at his post, as some think, until about the year B.C. 405, towards the end of the reign of Darius Nothus. When he died, however, we are not informed; but (as Josephus says) it was at "an advanced age," and towards the period which saw Malachi, the last of the prophets of the Old Testament dispensation, prophesying of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness.† The name "Nehemiah" signifies "comforted of Jehovah," and "comforted of Jehovah" he often was. "Remember me, O my God," was frequently his petition; "Remember me, O my God, for good," are the words with which the book that bears his name closes. It is an admirable conclusion to such a book, and seems to fall upon the ear like the dying words of a man who was conscious of having faithfully served his generation, and of having endeavoured to promote the divine glory. And this was, in fact, the case. There is a remarkable transparency in the character of Nehemiah. He writes his own history—for it is probable that he was himself the author of the book which informs us of his acts—but he writes as one who has nothing to conceal. Whether in the presence of royalty, in the presence of his countrymen, or in the presence of his enemies, he speaks all his mind, and lets every one know what his sentiments and feelings really are. Here and there we fancy that we see indications of a little self-complacency, but this infirmity, if it did exist, was counterbalanced by so many excellencies, that we can readily forgive it; and we do not wonder that such a man—a man so generous, so large-hearted, so patriotic, so sincere—could, as his days drew to a close, utter with confidence the prayer, "Remember me, O my God, for good."

And who can doubt that the prayer was heard? It looked forward to that future state, on the margin of which the faithful patriot stood, it was the echo of David's prayer, "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men." And

\* Neh. xiii. 28—30.

† Mal. iv. 2.

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like other eminent and holy men of the Jewish dispensation, Nehemiah passed away at death to a region of repose—to the heavenly Jerusalem, of which the earthly city was a type. Happy man! He is now, indeed, “comforted of the Lord.” No foe can ever lay waste the inheritance he has gained, or ever approach either its walls or gates. All who enter there are “remembered for good,” are safe from the assaults of men, are “comforted” in the eternal presence, and by the everlasting sight of God. “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God, and of the Lamb, shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him. And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads.”\*

The Christian reader of these pages will pardon us if, in finishing our task, we hold up Nehemiah as a model of genuine patriotism and of large-hearted philanthropy—qualities which are seldom met with in so eminent a degree, even in this more favoured age. The world needs such men—our own country needs such men, at the present day—men of wisdom to devise great things, men of courage and resolution to do great things. But only God can furnish them, and to him should we direct our prayer that he may raise up for us rulers of high-toned principle, who will not succumb to mere fashion or expediency, but will do what is right, whether men smile upon them or frown.

\* Rev. xxii. 3, 4.

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Y referring to the conclusion of a prior tract in this series, "The Captivity and its Mementoes," and also to the one entitled "Nehemiah and his Times," the reader will find various particulars respecting the Second Temple, erected by Zerubabel. The writings of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah having arisen out of this religious movement, shed light on each other, and should be studied together, regard being had to their chronological relations. They embrace the events and conditions of about eighty years, from the decree of Cyrus, B.C. 536, to the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus, B.C. 445, which assigned to Nehemiah the work of once more building the walls of the holy city. The changes that followed the overthrow of the Persian empire, owing to the disasters that befell Darius at the Granicus, at Issus, and in the plains of Gangamela; the triumphant progress of Alexander, and the division of his dominions after closing his marvellous career at Babylon, (B.C. 323,) in the thirty-second year of his age; the plunder and profanation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes; the revolt under Mattathias, and the rise, achievements, virtues, crimes, tragedies, and end of the Maccabean dynasty; the personal and political biography of Herod; these, and kindred matters belonging to the period, and affecting the Jewish people, are allotted to other dissertations.

For the present, we go back only to the seventieth year before the Christian era. The Pharisees were then in power; Alexandra was queen, and her eldest son Hyrcanus—a man of feeble nature—was high priest. At her death (B.C. 69), he was too weak to retain the reins of government, and sank for a time beneath the attacks of Aristobulus, his younger brother.

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whose public qualities had won over to him the army, and a sufficient number of the people to carry his ambitious designs into effect.

Their quarrel was the occasion of Pompey's interference. He was in favour of Hyrcanus, and when the Jews opposed his pleasure, he laid siege to Jerusalem, and after a period of three months, planted his proud standard in the house of the Lord. This was B.C. 63—"the beginning of the end," when Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles. In these contests, Antipater, an Idumean \* nobleman, had been brought into notice. He was the warm friend of the restored high priest, and, owing to the aid he had afforded Scaurus and Gabinius in their operations in Egypt and elsewhere, a great favourite with the Romans.

When, therefore, Pompey's sun finally set in the plains of Pharsalia (9th of August, B.C. 48), and his assassination immediately after left his great rival master of the world, Cæsar, who had before known and rewarded the zeal of Antipater, listened to his request by confirming Hyrcanus in the high priesthood, and took good care to secure Roman interests by making Antipater himself the procurator of Judea. This was the post he coveted. It opened the way for carrying out projects of aggrandisement that had long been looming before his imagination. He, therefore, at once appointed Phasaël, his eldest son, governor of Jerusalem, and the next, a boy only fifteen years old, governor of Galilee.†

In the East, men and things grow fast. This boy afterwards became Herod the Great. His father well knew that, though so young, pleasure and pageants, and a Sybarite's heaven of sweets and ease, were not his taste. He was soon in action, and by hunting down banditti, and putting them to death with relentless severity, he became the hero of Syrian villagers and Galilean song. When called to account for this by the Jewish authorities—as having, without trial, executed Jewish citizens—he went before them with an armed guard, robed in purple, and after bearding the Sanhedrim, got back to his own territory, and organised a force with which he marched towards Jerusalem to avenge the insult, intending to make short

\* Idumean. *Idoum* is another form for Edom, and *Idoumaia* or *Idumæa*, its softened Greek expansion.

† Not 25, as in "Anthon's Lemp. Dictionary."

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work with them and with the high priest at their head. The arguments and entreaties of his father and brother deterred him from this attempt. When the former was treacherously poisoned by Malichus, a man whom he had repeatedly served, Herod became the leading spirit of the scene. Cassius, on the fall of Julius Cæsar, gave him large forces and promised him the crown of Judea. His defeat and death at Philippi (B.C. 42) formed no barrier to the elevation of the Idumean. Antony at once became his friend, and though Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, excluded him from the government for a time, yet, sailing for Rome, undaunted by the perils of a winter voyage, he was invested with the regal power on the advice of Antony, with the countenance of Octavius, and the sanction of the Roman senate. He had, however, to fight for his new dignity. Antigonus held Jerusalem, and it was not, therefore, till B.C. 37 that the walls were carried, and that Herod began, as king of Judea, that career of despotism, cruelty, revenge, and splendour, which will ever draw attention to his history and attach detestation to his name.

The second triumvirate was at this time instrumentally ruling the destinies of the Roman Empire. It, however, was hastening to a remarkable crisis. Lepidus had been reduced to a cipher. Antony had become a voluptuary. Enamoured of Cleopatra, he made Octavius—subsequently called Augustus Cæsar—his avowed enemy, by sending back to him his sister Octavia, whom he had married, and wholly giving himself up to the charms of the Egyptian queen. The naval conflict of Actium (B.C. 31) settled their quarrel. The lord of the East took to flight, after being abandoned by the sorceress that had bewitched him, with fifty of her galleys, and soon after, both of them committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of the conqueror. The latter entered on his long career of power, and celebrated on three successive days a "triple triumph" for the victories he had achieved.

Herod had already paid court to Augustus, and gained him by a bold avowal of attachment to his fallen foe. The bearing of a king, and the absence of all presumption, saved him. He had laid aside his diadem, in token of submission. Cæsar himself replaced it upon his brow, out of admiration of his courage, and reliance on his assertion that as he had been to Antony, so would he be to him, if admitted to his

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fidence. The Jewish monarch gained more than he sought, and amidst the envy and astonishment of many who justly hated him, returned triumphant to his home. The domestic tragedy that followed is for others to depict.

It will be needful for the reader to bear in mind that the main feature of Herod's policy had been to conciliate the Romans. As to means, he was indifferent. To him Jehovah and Jupiter were much alike. Never was a more complete embodiment of the maxim that "the State is to consider religion politically." He had, it is true, overlooked the creed and claims of his Jewish subjects. These, however, he hoped to mollify. Their bitter prejudices against polytheism were a part of the moral problem he had to solve. He set about it by attempting to enchant the popular imagination. Yet it was a doubtful experiment. Captivity, and brutal outrage again and again on the ancient faith, had inspired the Jews with a deep and sincere disgust at idolatry. They shrank from contact with heathen institutions. Yet Herod imagined he could fascinate them with theatrical exhibitions; and wrestlers, musicians, charioteering, and gladiatorial conflicts were the entertainments he provided for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The neighbouring nations were invited to these spectacles; and now, to put an end to all doubt about his devotion to Augustus, he hung the emblazoned titles and trophies of the Emperor around the edifice in which they were assembled. Fresh favours were showered on him, and, whatever discontent he aroused at home, he was perfectly free from apprehension that, if his downfall ever came, it would be by a bolt hurled at his head from the Capitoline mount. On his first investment with the regal power, he had done sacrifice there, and had already redeemed his pledge to the old pagan god. Cæsar and Jove were equally satisfied with their votary. As he sat in his palace on the hill of Zion, and allowed his fancy to wander westward, the glories of Salem, and all the former glories of the lesser Asia and of Greece, were forgotten, as the beams of declining day beckoned him to a more distant land—to Italy and Rome; to him the Heliopolis of creation—the temple and the city of the sun.

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### HEROD'S GRAND PANACEA FOR THE RELIGIOUS DISAFFECTIONS OF THE JEWS.

We have said enough to indicate the state of the popular mind as to these encroachments on the distinctive character of the Jewish faith. Throughout Judea it was felt that all holy things might soon be sacrificed to unhallowed novelties of Idumean importation. The inhabitants are, it is true, sunk in formalism, and yet they cannot forget altogether the covenant of Jehovah, nor the heroic stand of Mattathias and Judas Maccabæus against the public desecration of his altars. The monarch that rules them is an alien, the client of a pagan power, and a traitor to the religion of their fathers. Something, therefore, must be done with him. Ten human figures stand darkly grouped together in a gloomy corner of Jerusalem. They are binding themselves by oath to assassinate Herod. A blind man is amongst them. If he cannot see where to strike, he knows how to animate. A spy is, however, in their secret; and Herod, who was going to the theatre, returns to his palace. They are taken, and, boldly displaying their daggers, and avowing their aim, are led to torture and death. This pours oil on the flames. Members of the secret society to which they belong tear the informer in pieces, and, in revenge, such of them as can be found out are dealt with by Herod in their own fashion. The popular mind, however, does not quail. More spies, more fortresses, more executions, will only heighten the exasperation that, like hidden fire, is raging through concealed channels around him.

At this juncture, (B.C. 22-3) the sky became as iron over the plains of Palestine. Drought, dearth, and plague scowled from their high places, and drowned with a death-like howl the cry of all minor ills. Moreover, Herod himself is the only man that can help his afflicted country. Owing to his prodigal expenditure in cities and fortifications, his treasury was nearly empty. Gold and silver vessels, however, yet cover his table and enrich his palaces. These he melted down, and sent agents to his friend Petronius in Egypt, who, Joseph, facilitated the purchase of corn for the Jewish population. The efforts of Herod were credible, and beyond all praise grain were obtained and dealt out.



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carefully tilled and sown to secure the crops of a succeeding year.

But the gratitude that was awakened for this timely and munificent aid did not extinguish the antipathies he had awakened and kept alive by his pagan predilections. Every day they saw him multiplying the monuments of heathenism. A deep-seated religious animosity was watching his steps. To propitiate them, therefore, he remitted a third part of the tribute. It was useless. The feeling of almost every man was against him. Judea was no longer the land of the living God. Their king had changed the customs of their fathers, and was only trying to bribe them into compliance with the customs of Baal. Several years later, therefore, on finding that imprisonments and judicial murders were useless, that by no method could he trim the balance so as to make Judaism and heathenism weigh alike in popular accounts, he hit upon the grand expedient of rebuilding the temple itself, and making it architecturally—next to his own palace—the pride of Jerusalem. A Jew of the name of Baba Ben Bota is said to have suggested it to him, as an atonement for putting to death the members of the Sanhedrim. However this may be, there can be no doubt that he expected it would establish his popularity with all classes, and hand down his name to all generations.

With this view, he gathered the leaders of the people together to lay his plan before them. Josephus gives us his speech on the occasion.\* He assures them that in all his enterprises he had had their good at heart. The cities he had built, and peopled, and beautified, were undertaken solely for their benefit. Moreover, in their severe calamities, he had been attentive to their welfare. Still, what he now proposed surpassed everything he had ever done, both in piety and value. The temple in which they worshipped, though it had stood the storms of 500 years, was not equal in elevation and grandeur to its predecessor, owing to the orders of Cyrus and the small means of the returned captives. Inasmuch, therefore, as his revenues were ample, and they enjoyed the favour of the Emperor of Rome—a blessing that exceeded all others—he proposed, he said, to rebuild the entire temple as an acknowledgment of the Divine mercy that had placed him on

\* Ant. xv. ii.

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the throne, and also that the service and the house of God, instead of wearing the air of anything poor and unseemly, might be adorned with all possible beauty and perfection.

It must have been a fine study for any profound observer of human nature to have scanned the features of the Jewish crowd during the delivery of this speech. Not a face was lighted up with joy and trust! Every one was trying to divine the dark plot veiled, as was thought, under these fair words. Pious language on the tongues of tyrants usually bodes something ill. There is, however, no rule without its exceptions. Much and justly as we may question his alleged motives, he truly intended to carry the designs he announced into execution. It was, in fact, quite in harmony with his character. History offers to our notice many individuals of great power, who perplex us by their superficial contrarieties. A deeper view discloses the fundamental principle of all their actions. There is no breach of unity. They build up and pull down with a further object than we immediately observe, the latter as diversified as the field of action, the former ever one and the same. Ambition, like vanity, is omnivorous. It can always feast on power. It can doff the military costume and put on priestly robes with equal ease, when a change of dress is called for by the occasion. We need not, therefore, wonder at a royal politician—however patent his hypocrisy—having every now and then some great religious business on hand. Moreover, Herod had many public and private enormities burdening his conscience, and, as a subordinate motive, he might think of easing the weight of his crimes by something like the modern doctrine of satisfaction. What is more buoyant than a Dead Sea of self-righteousness? The complacent feeling with which one floats on its surface is not ruffled by the thought that some time or other both will be engulfed in the abyss.

Whether, however, the king of the Jews will be allowed to acquire a character for piety, and to comfort himself with it by carrying into effect his present intentions, depends much on the audience he has just addressed. The magnitude of the undertaking, and, above all, the duplicity of the man, make them wonder and doubt. The temple, once destroyed, may never rise again.

Knowing that these suspicions were rife, Herod set t

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at once to allay them by accumulating materials for the new edifice, and by adopting the plan of gradual demolition and re-construction. Two years were spent in preparations. A thousand carriages and a thousand hands were employed in conveying and hewing and polishing huge blocks of marble for the work. The whole area was enlarged, by taking in side slopes where they still remained. The massive tiers of masonry that ages before had been carried up from the ravine below, were made from a certain depth less alanting, in order to gain spaces for the new colonnades and outworks that were to adorn the structure and perfect it in all its appointments. Moriah was again (B.C. 16-17) a theatre of industrial activity and life. The political prostration of Judea, the calamities of the past, and Herod's own hybrid religionism, alone kept the thoughts of the Jews from assuming the tone of happier days. The scene was, it is true, joyous, but after all only a faint shimmer of the brilliant sun that rose on them in the times of David and Solomon, a thousand years before.

The erection of the sanctuary proper and the holy of holies appears to have been the sole work of the priests.\* We must recollect that the sacerdotal body among the Israelites "were not merely a spirituality, but *literati of all the faculties*."† Dr. Kitto seems to think that the thousand priests, being skilled in architecture, "oversaw and directed the works." He, however, adds: "This last is a very remarkable fact, illustrative and confirmatory of the general impression, that the great Levitical body employed their abundant leisure largely in the cultivation of the higher branches of learning, science, art, law, medicine, and architecture; so that they were, in fact, the professionally learned body of the nation."‡ If, however, we consider that "the superintendence of weights and measures was committed to the priest," and that to prevent unrighteousness "in meteyard, in weight, and in measure, § standards both of capacity and length were kept in the tabernacle, and even within the sanctuary in which alone the priests durst enter,"|| we shall not be surprised to find that they engaged in the actual work of reconstructing the temple of the Most High.

\* Jos. Ant. xv. xi.

+ Michaelis, Smith's Tr.

‡ "Evening Readings—Life and Death of our Lord," p. 217.

§ Levit. xix. 35.

|| Michaelis, vol. 1. art. 52, Smith's Tr.

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A year and a half was sufficient for completing this more sacred portion of the building. During this operation, there had been no suspension of the daily service. Reland supposes that the usual observances must have been interrupted if the *sanctum* and *sanctum sanctorum* were entirely rebuilt.\* There is no reason for this supposition. The Jewish priests went on with the ordinary rites when blood and slaughter were just under their eyes. And the gradual extension of the sides and ends, so that the whole temple became "*paulatim par partes innovatum*," † was perfectly consistent with the Levitical requirement—especially as only hallowed hands had touched it, and thus brought the fresh materials and additions under a sort of immediate consecration. The returned captives had erected a very plain sort of building, nearly square, and, as Herod says, sixty cubits lower than Solomon's, from the absence of the elevated porch that adorned the first temple of Jehovah. A glance at the measurement of each will at once show the grander scale of the re-construction.

The length, breadth, and height of Zerubbabel's were respectively 70, 60, 60 cubits; of Herod's, 100, 70, 100. The porch of the latter would seem to have been far more majestic than even that of Solomon's Temple. While of like height—namely, 120 cubits—it was 100 in breadth, being thrown 15 cubits on each side beyond the main walls of the sanctuary and rising to a like height—namely, 100 cubits—in a square mass, ere it was crowned with twenty more in a style to throw grace over the whole elevation.

The holy and holy of holies were at the heart of the building, which was not 100 cubits high *all over in direct perpendicular height*. Six rose in a broad base, like that we see in large buildings now. On this was a wall of *forty*—one mass of polished marble. Next came a slight projection, a cubit broad, glittering, it is said, with gold, and running in a straight line all along the temple. It formed an exquisite border to it, and was so touched by the chisel and aided by ornamentation, that, like watered silk, look where you would, the eye was struck as with golden waves in motion. Above this was a channel of four cubits to carry off the rain, hidden in the framework of the roof of this part of the erection.

These items together make fifty-one cubits. This was the

\* Jos. Ant. xv. 11, §, note. Ed. Hav.

+ Grotius.

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height of the *first* roof. There was a way up to it by winding stairs placed in the north-east corner; and, guarded by a sufficient parapet, one could look, as Lightfoot says, from the *leads* down upon the courts below. In reality, there was no lead in the case, the substance employed for tops of houses, etc., being a composition that hardened by exposure to the atmosphere. The Talmud allots a width of twenty-five cubits to the roof, on each side of the central portion of the temple. Standing, therefore, with his back to the parapet, the spectator would look up at a central elevation of the same height as that on which he stood, *resting on the wall of the real temple*. Its actual breadth was only twenty cubit, and subtracting from the whole width of seventy cubits, the fifty which were divided between the sides for the chambers, etc., all along north and south, he would have before him the higher portion of the sanctuary proper, and the holy of holies, without any of the appendages which were necessarily attached to the larger dimensions at the base.

"A familiar example of this," says the above author, "we have in the building of exceeding many of our churches; the pile riseth of a like breadth to the lower leads, and then it riseth only in the middle to the height or roof of the church. And so it was with the temple. Go either to east or west end, and stand in the middle and look up, and it was one hundred cubits; but go any whit like towards the right or left hand, and it was but half so high, for there were the lower leads.\*"

To this second roof, or highest part of the structure, there was an ascent through a chamber built over the holiest of all; and a second border, like that we have described below, glancing and rippling in the light, ran parallel to it at the summit, and formed a rich relief to the dazzling brightness of the subjacent wall.

Three stories of chambers flanked the sides—five on a floor; and these, with eight at the west end, made thirty-eight rooms for corn, wine, and oil, or for the treasures and general stores of the house of God. A passage, three cubits broad, entered by doors in the side, ran along in front of them.

The gate of the porch, as it was called, an independent structure, is worthy of notice. It rose seventy cubits, with an open space of twenty to the height of forty—thus allowing

\* Works, vol. ix. p. 256, Pitman's Edit.

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a clear view of the porch itself. It was surmounted with five beams of precious wood, having a row of stone between each. The lowest beam stretched a cubit beyond the gateway at either end, and then every one above that a cubit beyond the one beneath it, so that the whole formed a fan-like expansion of the most beautiful carved work, finished off with a richly-wrought border two cubits and a half broad; that from the highest and longest beam turned and went into the lowest and shortest, and thence ran down "by the cheeks of the entry" to the ground.

Were a person wishing to go up to the temple to enter by the eastern gate, the only one on this side, he would see on his left hand the larger space of the great court of the Gentiles. And as he walked under Solomon's portico,\* and round to the south, he would admire the splendid colonnades that had been formed by hundreds of pillars, eighteen feet in circumference, all cut out of solid white marble. That which ran along the southern side of the quadrangle was of great splendour. It was *triple*. The outer and the inner promenade were each thirty feet wide, the centre forty-five; the height of the two former being fifty feet, and that of the latter ninety; a second line of slender columns supporting the loftier portion of the range. There were here four rows of pillars, one being attached to the exterior wall. The capitals were enriched with Corinthian beauty; the ceilings above were of cedar; and the collective sculpture and carving were fitted to awaken the utmost admiration.

From the roof of this colonnade, added to the depth and closeness of the ravine below, the gaze downwards was more formidable to an unpractised eye than it would be at twice the height of the monument. On this side were two gates, on the west four, and on the north one. We have already alluded to Shushan on the east. The colonnades on these sides are *double*, with three rows of pillars, all partaking of the same beauty, while over the whole area—600 feet or more square—in this and in the inner court, was a paving exquisitely arranged, inlaid with marble, fit for the kings of the earth.

Were our spectator to cross this, he would come to a curious wall, about five feet high, which, if a Gentile, <sup>1</sup>

\* John x. 23.

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could not pass. Various inscriptions on pillars in it would inform him of the fact. If, however, he could do so, he would ascend by fourteen steps into a space of ten cubits, that invests the wall of the two courts appropriated to Jewish worshippers. From the upper one, called the court of the priests or of Israel, in which was the brazen altar, the path back to the eastern gate would lead him through the gate NICANOR. The Talmudists make this the name of a man eminent for his piety. Wishing to do honour to the temple, he had two brazen doors made for it at Alexandria. On the voyage home a storm arose, and, to lighten the ship, the sailors cast one of them into the sea. As they proposed to get rid of the other in the same way, Nicanor lashed himself to it, resolving to share its fate. This pious zeal not only deterred them from their purpose, but was followed by a cessation of the storm. Nor was this all. When he reached Ptolemais, he called upon God to restore him the lost door, and the sea, or, according to others, a great fish, threw it upon the spot in answer to his prayer. The author of this story either intended no disguise or failed to secure it. He has modelled his miracle on the history of Jonah, with no one to give the inspired comment which stamps the latter as a symbol of the death of the Son of Man, in which he spoiled death, and "died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living."

Our own conjecture is that this gate was a sort of triumphal monument, either built anew, or newly named, on the defeat and slaughter of Nicanor, the Syrian general, whose head was brought to Jerusalem. This was hung up in the citadel. He had, it appears, professed friendship for Judas Maccabæus. Afterwards, at the command of his master, he sought to send him in fetters to Antioch. Judas, however, escaped; and Nicanor, going to the priests when they were at sacrifice, and pointing around the temple, swore that unless they delivered the hero into his hands, he would level it with the ground, raze their altar, and consecrate the place to Bacchus.\* No other occasion connected with this name awakened equal horror, or, in its frustration, equal triumph. And as the hand of the blasphemer was cut off, and fixed somewhere over against the temple towards which it was impiously stretched

\* 1 Macc. vii. 47; 2 Macc. xiv. 32, 33; and xv. 33-35.

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out—*justit manum dementis contra templum suspendi*—the name *Nicanor* might have been given to this gate from the date of that memorable victory.

There was a descent of ten or twelve feet—seven cubits—into the court of the women through this gate. It is supposed that Asa or Jehoshaphat originally enclosed this space from that which had been left open on the east by Solomon, as far as the entrance gate or porch which he erected in that quarter. However this may be, it was quadrangular, and divided from the upper court by a wall two and thirty cubits in height. The only peculiarity in it was a series of balconies, from which the women witnessed the rejoicing for the pouring out of water at the feast of tabernacles. This altered in some degree its architectural arrangements, by the breaks between the floor and the roof made by the galleries. The breadth of these courts, that is, from north to south, was 135 cubits. This also was the length of the court of the women, making it a perfect square; whereas the upper court was 187 cubits from east to west; and all around in each was a majestic line of columns fronting piazzas, in which the chosen race walked to and fro, and worshipped according to their wont, either in the spirit of self-righteousness, or in befitting humiliation before God. Thence the path is through the lower gate to Shashan (lily), which from its lily-work might be called (Acts iii.) the Beautiful.

How glorious is this structure in its materials and workmanship! Eight years have been employed on its main portions, and yet in the time of our Lord—forty-six years from the commencement—something remains to be done for its establishment and perfection. Moriah looks more dazzling than it did a millennium back. Yet how different the associations! Heaven has now dressed its victim for sacrifice. Herod, as its minister of vengeance, has arrayed it in the costliest robes only to render the pile more splendid, and to heighten the conflagration. Yet when the Jews saw the doomed structure standing there in glory and beauty, they were filled with delight. A new lustre appeared to be shed over the whole scene. The weeping of the old men of former days was forgotten in tears of joy. The eye was enchanted wherever it fell. The temple looked beautiful and bright as the Jungfrau among mountains. From the Mount of



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from Zion, from Acra, from the lofty hills beyond, as the sun swept around to the tower of Psephinos and its western home, no object in the panorama stood forth in equally bold and undimmed magnificence. It was the koh-i-noor of Palestine, however destined to be calcined and darkened into blackness and desolation.

### THE EAGLE AND THE HATCHET PARTY—ITS DOINGS AND ITS FRUITS.

One of the mysteries of Providence is that it often throws a halo of glory around tyrants. The Jews love not Herod one whit more on account of his munificence. His semi-heathenism is as palpable as ever, and has not hesitated to defile the temple. The spectre of the murdered Mariamne perpetually haunts him. His children, sisters, and closest relations, are either plotting against his life, or accuse each other of doing so, and make him the victim of constant suspicion and care. Horrible disease infests his whole body, which, with a love of life and vengeance, he seeks to ward off, that he may still make those who hate him tremble. The last year of his life, or thereabouts, burns as fiercely with infernal fire as at any other period of his history. The massacre of the Innocents, noticed by the Evangelists, is an insignificant item in his enormities. However, Herod is ill, and therefore something, it is thought, may now be done to vindicate the purity of Judaism.

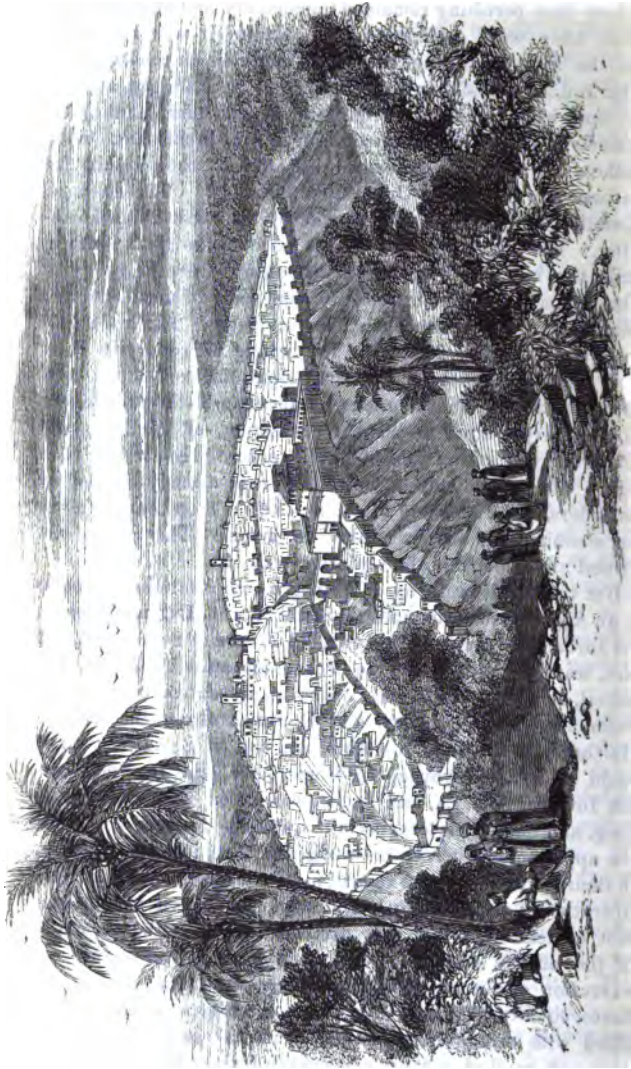
An insurrection consequently was got up in the following way. There were in Jerusalem two sophists, Judas, son of Sepphoræus, and Matthias, son of Margalus, held in honour by the whole nation, as possessing an accurate knowledge of the institutions of their country. The young men gathered in great crowds to hear their expositions of the law. They became as bold as a lion, especially on learning that the man they had to fear was at his last gasp. Statues, busts, or representations of any living thing, they denounced as a profanation, if introduced into the temple. Nothing could be more to the point. It was truth of present applicability. It was necessarily personal, as Josephus will demonstrate.

"Over the great gate, the king had erected a golden eagle. This the sophists exhorted their hearers to cut down; saying, 'that it was honourable to die for the laws of one's country; for

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to those thus perishing remained immortality and endless bliss. While they were speaking in this strain, it was rumoured that the king was dying, and the young men, in consequence, embarked more boldly in the enterprise. Accordingly, at mid-day, and when many were engaged in the temple, they let themselves down by thick ropes from the roof, and with hatchets cut away the golden eagle." Away, thou symbol of heathen power and of Jewish subjugation! The courage, animation, and triumph of that moment will cost them something. The king's lieutenant is at once on the spot, perhaps, while the immediate actors were hanging over the valley of Jehoshaphat; and, having seized about forty of them, hurried them away to the presence chamber of Herod. All his inquiries are met only by defiance. The young men glory in their deed. The king goes forth to the people, his excitement mastering his disease, and, in a long harangue, calls for punishment on the perpetrators of the act, as guilty of sacrilege, and aiming at the subversion of public order. His wrath rises high. The people entreat, but the pyre is already lighted by his orders, and Judas and Matthias, and the men that cut away the abomination, are cast into the flames. The others, not burned alive, met their fate in other ways.

But the disease returns, or, rather, a complication of diseases in an aggravated form, and the hot baths of Callirrhoe across the Jordan, and fomentations of tepid oil, are of no avail. Herod dies, leaving a will, which requires confirmation by Cæsar. The codicil, as is often the case, opens up questions between the claimants. Ere Archelaus and Herod Antipas, the sons of Malthace, the sixth of his ten wives, and of Samaritan birth, could undertake a voyage to Rome, Archelaus, to whom was left Idumea, Samaria, and Judea, was hailed by multitudes as king, and had to perform certain quasi-regal acts. Accepting the applause with which he was greeted, he, in return, listened to their petitions for the remission of various imposts, and the liberation of those whom Herod had recently cast into prison. Not content with this, they demanded, further, the execution of the officers and agents who had aided in the seizure and execution of the sophists and iconoclasts. The zealots were fierce, equally deaf to reason and entreaty. Jerusalem was filled with strangers, who had come to celebrate the pass-over. A band of soldiers was sent to repress the tumult. The



VIEW OF ANCIENT JERUSALEM FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

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sacrifice was on the altar. The worshippers became infuriated, and were led to think it only a display of pious zeal to stone the soldiery, and to drive them from the temple. Quickly, again, the sacrifice goes on. Suddenly shouts are heard. Troops of cavalry attack the encampments outside the walls, and drive the strangers to the mountains. Inside, the confusion is greater still. The infantry clear the streets, and cut down all that oppose them. It is thus Archelaus, ere formally installed, asserts his sovereignty, and the stones and precincts of that holy place record his self-inauguration in the blood of 3000 of the slain.

Two things will especially strike the reader of Jewish history in investigating the downfall of this celebrated people: 1st. Their own blind rabid bigotry and intestine divisions. 2nd. The insatiable avarice of several of the Roman commanders, and the extent to which they fostered public disorder, as furnishing occasion for foreign interference.

When, therefore, Archelaus and Herod Antipas had sailed for Rome, Sabinus, the procurator of Syria, came on the stage. He had promised to keep aloof at Caesarea. But as soon as they and Varus, his superior officer, were away, he hastened to Jerusalem, seized on the palace, demanded an account of public moneys, and so enraged all parties by his rapacity, that, at the Pentecost, the Jews gathered together from Galilee to Idumea, not so much to observe the festival as to take vengeance on the Romans. Varus had left a Roman legion in the city, on his way to Antioch, a short time before Sabinus ventured to move. The latter was now trembling for his fate. He and his forces were surrounded. The temple and the palace were held in siege. The Jews glowed with resentment. A few seconds, and this furnace of liquid fire at white heat will boil over, like a stream of lava, carrying destruction in its course. Another stream will meet it, and thus double the desolation.

There were three towers of great strength and beauty on the northern walls of Jerusalem. The palace was protected by their position. They were erected by Herod. The highest of these, Phasaëlus, so called in memory of his brother, exhibited at this time a figure on its summit, waving his hand with great earnestness, as if to direct the movements of the troops below. One would usually look for a Roman general at the head of his men. Sabinus, however, is not there, but

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thus, from a safe place, beckoning to the legionary forces to attack the Jews. The king's way to the western gate is open to them, and many, at the word of command, rush across into the temple, and, with their habits of discipline, soon overmatch the undisciplined crowds that assail them. This was in the *area* of the building. The Jews, sensible of their disadvantage, got on the roofs and balconies, and, by hurling down on the Roman legion whatever missiles they could command, dealt death and disaster as widely as they could on the exasperated foe. But these colonnades, we have already described, are roofed with cedar. These balconies are woodwork, and though this is a temple to the God of heaven and of earth, its object cannot save it when its frailest materials, perishing in the flames, are an apt symbol of the worthlessness of all forms of godliness that lack its power, and of the fate of these formalists themselves, at the final trial, when the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. The enraged zealots that now line the parapet, become aware of the peril they incur. Soon an intense heat spreads beneath their feet, the planks spring up with a volley of sharp, rattling thunder-claps; and here and there the fierce blaze blinds them. Some throw themselves headlong on the spears of the enemy, some die by their own hand, some perish in the conflagration, and, when this work of ruin is over, and the Romans triumph, they plunder the treasury of the temple of four hundred talents. Meanwhile, Sabinus had sent to Varus, the governor of Syria, to inform him of his perilous situation. The latter hastened to his relief, or rather to that of his own legion; and as his approach had cleared the outskirts, Sabinus himself got away without seeing him, only too happy to escape the reproaches and threats he would have met, as the sole author of these evils. The Jews, however, suffered. The abettors of sedition, the zealots who were dreaming of national independence, and boasting that God was their King, were sought out; and while dungeons and prisons were filled with victims, two thousand were ordered for crucifixion. Moreover, on his departure, Varus did what was most likely to breed new troubles—left the old legion to keep the peace.

Nine years after this, or thereabouts, Archelaus was banished to Vienne in Gaul, and the share Herod left him, and Augustus

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had confirmed to him, became by confiscation a Roman province. The sceptre had finally departed from Judah, and Judea, Samaria, and Idumea, now poured their wealth into the coffers of the emperor.

We know not precisely the extent of the damage that had been done in the temple. It was most likely repaired as quickly as possible. Other insults were meditated. Cæsar died A.D. 14 of the common era, and, under Tiberius, who succeeded him, Pilate the procurator introduced images of him into Jerusalem. The heroic persistence of the Jews, and their readiness to die rather than endure this outrage, led to their removal. Caius Caligula, however, the next on the list (A.D. 37), was determined they should regard him as a god. He, therefore, sent Petronius with an army to Jerusalem, with orders to place his statues in the sanctuary, and not only to slaughter all that opposed him, but to enslave the rest of the nation. Again their entreaties and martyr spirit moved the Roman general. He wrote to Caius, and received for answer that his own life was at stake in the matter. Caius *would* be thought a god. But this letter was detained by the winds of heaven, and another reached Petronius twenty-seven days before it was possible for him to know or to execute the tyrant's impious decision, informing him that Caligula was no more.

It was about fourteen years before the death of Augustus that Christ appeared on earth. His public life, therefore, comes into the reign of Tiberius (A.D. 14—37), to whom, for upwards of two and twenty years, heaven, in its inflictions, committed the destinies of men. In the last year of the Saviour's ministry, as if he had never noticed the magnificence of the temple, his disciples, struck with fresh admiration, pointed out to him the various edifices that adorned it: "See ye not all these things?" was his reply. "Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down."

Already we have seen the absolute dependence of the Jews on the Romans. Claudius (A.D. 41) bestowed upon Agrippa, grandson of Herod, in addition to other territories, his grandfather's dominions. But by his death, three years after, they again reverted into a Roman province. The festivals that were held at Jerusalem were usually the occasions of dis-

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turbance. Insults were offered to the worshippers ; and Josephus relates that on one occasion, owing to such insults, a riot took place, in which thousands were crushed in their attempt to escape from the soldiers that poured in by the colonnades to drive them from the temple. Among themselves also a formidable enemy appeared in the Sikars, Sicarii, assassins, who banded together, and forming a secret society, murdered Jonathan the high priest and numberless others, using their daggers freely in the light of day. All these and other disorders among the Jews were a feast to their foes.

The twelfth of Nero (A.D. 66) is the year from which Josephus dates the war that entailed on his nation calamities as tremendous as any on record. It arose out of a decision of the emperor in a matter that had been pending for some time affecting the government of Cæsarea. The Jews claimed the city as built by Herod, alleging that he was a Jew. The Greeks claimed it as a Grecian city, on the ground that Herod had erected statues and temples in it; that, in fact, he would not have paganized a city for the Jews. In it he had actually built a temple to Cæsar, and Nero assigned the city to the Greeks. There was a synagogue there. A Cæsarean inverted a potter's vessel at the entrance, and offered birds on it to irritate the Jews. The pile was lighted, and every moment after fresh fuel was heaped on it, that made the flame spread and burn with greater fierceness. John the publican gave Florus eight talents of silver—£2700—to stop the erection of workshops on the spot. He took the money, withdrew, and left him and the heathens to embitter the quarrel. The Jews at length retired, carrying off the book of the law from Cæsarea. He threw John and others into chains for it, and after employing every means to exacerbate the feelings of each party against the other, sent and robbed the temple at Jerusalem of seventeen talents—nearly £100,000 if of gold—under pretence of Cæsar's service.

Nothing more was needed to throw the Sanhedrim and the whole populace into a state of the greatest excitement; and Florus, on hearing it, and that some of them had carried round a basket pretending to beg for him, made a rapid march on Jerusalem, fixed his quarters in the palace, and gave up the city to licence, massacre, and pillage. Crucifixion and laughter did their work, and nearly four thousand spirits took

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their flight on that dark day to the unseen. Nor was this the end of his vindictive schemes. He insisted on the people going forth to salute other troops that were on their way from Caesarea. Influenced by the priests, etc., they went. Insults awaited them, and the cohorts, instructed by Florus, fell on them, and drove them through the Bezetha (New Town), while he pushed forward the troops in the city to join them, that by their united forces they might secure the temple and the strong fortress Antonia that commanded it. His real object was to drain the treasury, and the people fearing this, mounted the roofs, galled his soldiers by missiles from above, and at length cut off the communication between the colonnades and the fortress. Foiled in this way, he cooled, and parleyed, and contented himself for the present with concocting fresh matter for future havoc and extortion. This was in April and early May, A.D. 66.

Agrippa the Second, who ruled a small kingdom north of Galilee, being then on his way from a visit to Egypt, and happening to reach Jerusalem at this crisis, sought to allay the excitement of the Jews, and to disperse the cloud he foresaw gathering over them. He convened them on the Xystus, and in a speech of great ability and prudence advised them to submit to the sway of the Romans, Providence having clearly assigned them the dominion of the world. Under his advice they restored the communication with the Antonia, and began to collect the tribute that was in arrears. This better aspect of affairs was of short duration. His first success encouraged him to go farther, too far to be successful a second time. Hoping for the recall of Florus, and desirous of forestalling his malicious designs, he ventured to advise the Jews to obey the procurator's orders in the interim. However expedient and patriotic this counsel might be, as evincing a concern for his countrymen, it went far to neutralize his previous efforts, and only fixed their thoughts and antipathies more on a man whose name they could not hear without loathing and detestation. Nay, Agrippa himself thus became an object of suspicion and of public insult. Some threw stones at him; the multitude decreed his expulsion from the city; and he, after doing his best to keep Florus quiet, indignant at the treatment he had met with, left the distractions he could not calm.



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### ZEALOTS AND MODERATES.

Had it been in the counsels of heaven, we could have wished a renewal of the earthly kingdom of David, and a Jewish power to counterbalance the power of imperial Rome. This was not to be. The sins of the Jews had been too heavy; their formalism and corruption too deep; and they were to learn by the saddest lessons that God is just and true.

It was about this time that a large party of the zealots massacred the Romans at Masada; that Eleazar, a bold stripling, son of Ananus the high priest, persuaded the priests to receive neither gifts nor sacrifices from foreigners, which was a rejection of the sacrifice of Cæsar on behalf of his people; and that the leading men, as the others were for war and confided in the military genius of Eleazar, sent a deputation to Agrippa and Florus to come and crush the insurrection in its birth. The latter was glad at heart, dismissed them without a reply, and left the thing to grow worse. Agrippa sent the peace-party three thousand cavalry, and with these succours they at once seized on the upper town. The insurgents had the lower city, and the temple. After seven days' mutual slaughter, Eleazar, gaining a number of Sikars—assassins—to his side, took the upper town, and put the troops to flight. Public records and contracts, debtors' bonds, the house of the high priest, and a palace that belonged to Agrippa and Bernice, were all committed to the flames.

Then came (Aug. A.D. 66) the assault of the Antonia, a marvellous fortress built by Herod to overawe the multitudes who came up to worship. In the plans it is usually seen marked by a parallelogram jutting out at the north-west corner of the temple. It was originally an Asmonean fort, called Baris. A Roman legion was always kept there. In two days Eleazar took it, and, though the garrison surrendered, put them to the sword. The palace, a magnificent structure of the upper town, remained, and, as there was ready access to the three forts formerly named, and it had all the strength and arrangements of a castle, the other party had taken refuge there, and, by showering down their missiles from above, made horrible work beneath the ramparts. Brother with brother! a house divided against itself. Complications, too, arose among the Zealots. Manahem, son of Judas, the

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Galilean, became a rival of Eleazar, and now headed the siege. He took the palace and allowed Agrippa's troops and the Jews to retire: not so the Romans. They in dejection, unable to escape, could only break up their quarters, and get into the towers. There they were pressed hard by Eleazar—Manahem having fallen through the jealousy of the former and his own presumption—and when Metilius, who commanded them, offered to capitulate, and asked only for life, the solemn pledge of protection and safety was given to him and to his men. Accordingly, they marched out, but no sooner had laid down their arms, than the Jewish leader and his party butchered them upon the spot. It was a fatal act. It had in it every element of atrocity. The Romans were disarmed, thinking themselves safe in the inviolability of treaties and of oaths. To these they appealed, not suing for mercy or making any effort at defence. It was, moreover, on the Sabbath, and immediately so affected all other men, save the mad band of Eleazar, as to throw sadness over the entire city. Metilius, to his shame, begged for life, and was spared on the infamous promise to Judaize even to circumcision.

It is an awful fact, in connection with this instance of Jewish treachery, that at the same day and hour, and Josephus says in one hour, twenty thousand Jews were massacred at Cæsarea. From Syria to Alexandria they became objects of hatred and the occasion of calamitous outbreaks, portending the ruin that hung over the devoted race.

In October, A.D. 66, Cestius Gallus, the governor of Syria, made a threatening movement, and encamped with a considerable force about five or six miles from Jerusalem. It was the feast of tabernacles. The Zealots swayed the multitudes, as a strong wind the ocean. Full of fury they rushed to arms, and not only with small loss cut off hundreds of the Romans, but seized the baggage mules at their rear, and carried off the spoil. A few days after, however, Cestius routed the Jews, and pursued them to the gates of Jerusalem. There, not a mile north of the city, at the Scopus, he fixed his camp. Having set fire to the new town (Bezetha) and the timber market, and got as far as the inner wall, the Romans formed a *shell*, shield in shield, compacted as the shell of a tortoise, and under this mined the wall at the north quarter of the temple, and prepared to set fire to the gate. Everything s

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in his hands. Numbers in the city, likewise, were ready to welcome him—the whole of the moderate party, and those who were weary of Zealot intimidation. Yet he suddenly suspended his operations, and, for reasons which have never come to light—though, perhaps, Florus was at the bottom of the whole—withdraw his troops, and most unaccountably began to retrace his steps to his former encampment. A most disastrous move! The Jews in pursuit drove them into the ravines, covered them with destructive missiles from above, and met them on their egress, so that scarcely a Roman would have escaped had not night overshadowed them. During the darkness, Cestius, by a stratagem, saved the main body of the forces he had left; but nearly six thousand had fallen, their battering rams and other war engines were captured, and the Jews, not being able to overtake Cestius, gathering up the spoils, returned with songs of joy to Jerusalem, and, intoxicated with victory, imagined they foresaw the fall of imperial power in Judea.

## DESECRATION AND FINAL DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE.

Nothing but war was now heard of in Jerusalem. Even those who were friendly to the Romans were brought, either by force or persuasion, to side with the triumphant party. Joseph, the son of Gorion, and Ananus, the high priest, were elected to the supreme control of affairs in the city, and especially to see to the fortifications. The whole country was assigned to generals newly chosen, and appointed to meet the tremendous crisis now at hand. All thoughts of peace were banished, and the Jews imagined they were about to conquer the world. But Rome was then the lion of God.

The defeat of Cestius and the slaughter of his troops was felt as a stain on the Roman name, to be wiped out at any cost. A great military power must repair its disasters, or it sinks. Nero was uneasy at the aspect of affairs, and therefore looked around him for a man equal to the emergency. Vespasian was sent, not because the tyrant liked him, but because the soldiers did, and he was confessedly the first general of the age. He immediately entered on his mission. Near the close of A.D. 66, he arrived in Palestine, and, leaving Jerusalem for the present, attacked the strongholds of Galilee, and took them. It is no part of our province to detail these transac-

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ons. Jotapata, Joppa, Tarichæa, Gamala, and Gischala, fell in succession before the prowess of the Romans.

Jerusalem itself, however, in the meantime, presented the most affecting spectacle on earth, more so to us than the last. The ghastly contortions of approaching dissolution are often harder to contemplate than the closing scene. Eleazar's influence had again become paramount. Then came John of Gischala, who, after having sworn fealty to Ananus and the people, went to the zealots, and accused the former of inviting Vespasian to come and take possession of the city. The disastrous influence of this unprincipled intriguer was soon felt. He was with Ananus by day, with the Zealots by night. The existence of the latter party was incompatible with the safety of the state. The high priest, therefore, aroused the citizens against them, and drove them into the temple. They would probably have been mastered by the wisdom and firmness of this great and good man, had it not been for John. Seeking power at any price, he disclosed the plans of Ananus, and gave the Zealots a fatal hint which he meant to take effect—that the Idumæans would readily come to their help. The suggestion was acted on. A letter of invitation was sent, and, under the delusion that they were to fight for freedom, and not for a lawless tyranny, a force of twenty thousand men was speedily under the walls of Jerusalem. Joshua, next senior priest to Ananus, explained to them the true state of the case in a speech from one of the towers, but in vain. Though vexed at being retained outside the city, and at finding the party that had sent for them unable to help them, they were kept from breaking up and returning at once, by the shame of gathering in such numbers, and coming so far on a bootless errand. They knew not then the awful work that would come into their hands ere the morrow. Crowding together, with no shelter but their shields, they endured, hour after hour, torrents of rain, with lightnings and thunder. The Idumæans thought for a time the wrath of God was about to fall on them for undertaking the expedition. The Zealots met in council to devise some means of relief for them. The citizens said, God is fighting for us, and the enemy within and without will perish at his presence. Howl on, thou tempest! and, ye lightnings, flash no disclosure on the movements of the vengeful powers to whom it is now given to hurt the earth and the

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sea! Sleep fast, ye sentinels, whom the storm has overcome and lulled, as in your death sleep, beneath the colonnades of the sanctuary! Yes, sleep! Who should disclose what heaven takes such pains to conceal? Near you the foe is creeping stealthily, from the temple towards the gate, at which the Idumean Gorgo shakes her serpent locks. She will soon be within its precincts, and hiss loud enough to awake you all. These saws in Zealot hands, these consecrated tools taken from God's house, will cut through that gate, and admit the alien host unheard amidst the thunder. So it is: the sentries sleep, the bars are severed, and the troops pour in. Once in the city, they let loose the Zealots besieged in the temple, and then together joined in the perpetration of horrors surpassed in no civil war that ever raged among men. No quarter was given. The chief priests, Ananus and Joshua, they slew, and standing over their dead bodies, insulted them, and cast them out unburied, to be food for dogs. Both of these were men of eminent integrity. "Virtue herself, as I think," says Josephus, "groaned over the fate of these men. When these were dispatched, the Zealots and Idumeans attacked and butchered the people, as if they had been a herd of unclean beasts." "The outer court of the temple was deluged with blood, and the day dawned upon eight thousand five hundred dead."

As if instinct with the ferocity of tigers, they raged throughout the city, and, unchecked by pity and the shrieks of the weak and helpless, revelled in slaughter, tortured the youthful and the noble to gain them to their party, and, on finding them firm, slew them and cast them out, to make room for more. Myriads were thus added to the slain. When, however, they wished to seize on wealth, or to destroy a power they dreaded, they instituted mock tribunals, and if, as in the eminent case of Zacharias, the son of Baruch, the seventy judges preferred death to the guilt of passing a wicked sentence, they were themselves beaten, and the noble-minded and free-spoken patriot murdered in the temple, and thrown into the ravine below, already foul and revolting with one vast festering mass. Each hour was pregnant with new horrors. To inter or to bewail a relative was a signal for assassination. The old feeling of respect for the dead was extinct. The rites of sepulture were forbidden, and terror was employed to chill all human sympathy and to freeze up the fountain of its tears.

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It was one feature in all this mystery of evil that the Idumæans were permitted to help the party that was working the utter ruin of the nation. It was not till their savage thirst was slaked with blood that they became aware of their mistake. They had given fresh force to a vile tyranny contrary to their intention, and yet, as if the destroying angel were commissioned to make their change of mind the opening of a new page of calamities, the Zealots were glad to see their backs turned, lest the sense of the injustice they had been led into should convert them from allies into the bitterest foes. They went, at least the most of them, and the situation became worse.

The reader has seen that John of Gischala first brought this evil on the city. His ability and diabolical energy had now made a way for him to supreme power. Even the bloody star of Eleazar paled at his glance. A third, of fiercer and more gory aspect, at present looks with malignant glare upon the scene. A new minister of hell was sent by heaven to pour out a fresh vial of wrath upon Jerusalem. This was *Simon*, the son of Gioras. He was a Gerasene by birth— young, powerful, and daring. Cast aside by Ananus, he had betaken himself to the brigands who had made Masada their head-quarters. Here he gathered forces and laid waste Idumæa; defeated the Zealots, who feared his growing power, and, when by stratagem they had captured his wife, advanced to Jerusalem, and swore that, unless they set her at liberty, he would break down the wall and exterminate them all. They sent her back, and he withheld his hand.

Soon after matters stood thus. A portion of the Idumæan force had remained under John, who, at this time, ruled the city. They now rose against him, plundered his treasures, and sided with the people. The tables were turned. He and the Zealots had to attack their old allies and the citizens together. Apprehending everything from his cruelty and vigour, as well as from the party they had left, they assembled with the chief priests and deliberated on the measures they should adopt. Blindness and infatuation presided at their council. To overthrow *John*, they determined to admit *Simon*. A ravening wolf was prowling about the temple, and they called in the leopard to destroy him. No sooner, however, had he entered than he lashed his tail, opened wide his jaws, and tore down all as his common prey. When the request was

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first made to him, he accepted it haughtily, and as he and his forces passed through the gate, the heavens rang with the acclamations of the people. They welcomed him as a saviour, but the quick discovery of their fatal error changed all their gladness into mourning and woe.

The iron hand was felt everywhere. The decisive movement by which, in the third year of the war, he became master of Jerusalem, was barring up John and the Zealots in the temple. His precautions made egress impossible. All that belonged to them in the city was seized. A new complication now arose. *Eleazar*, whose lustre had been sorely eclipsed, pretended to be indignant at John's atrocities. In reality, he himself wished for supreme power. He therefore, with three others of distinction, seceded from the latter, and carrying with him a body of Zealots, shut himself up in the *inner court* of the temple. It was full of consecrated provisions, and he, able to maintain his force, and being in a higher position, began a series of assaults on the tyrant that commanded the *outer court*, with the view of annihilating an authority that had abrogated his own, and thrown him far into the shade.

From the loftiest colonnade, the arrows of death fell on the adherents of John—from the roofs and apertures of the range around the court of the Gentiles, on the adherents of Simon. John was, therefore, between two fires, though, saddest of all, his whole company was inebriated with the temple wine! Through all this, sacrifice was offered, though every one was strictly searched to see that he came only for worship. Yet the darts from the war engines often fell with fatal effect around the altar.

The year 70, however, had now arrived. Titus and six hundred picked horsemen were reconnoitering the city prior to general operations, unless overtures of submission should come from the inhabitants. In this inspection he nearly lost his life. The next day the gathering hosts were seen at the Scopus. Here Titus encamped with two legions, another was a little in the rear, while the *tenth* had orders to encamp at the Mount of Olives, over against the city on the east—the spot where once sat *One* who, amidst his disciples, foretold these days, and would have averted them and the impending doom. In the month of April, the Roman forces were brought near the northern wall, and extended westward on the high

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ground as far as Hippius. Titus commanded in person the centre division posted on the north-west, opposite the tower Psephinus. The city was summoned to surrender in due form, but in vain. John had outwitted Eleazar, sending armed men in double dress, and as if unarmed, no weapon being visible, into the inner court, under the guise of piety. Once inside, they threw off their outer vestments and effected their object. John now drew his supplies from the temple, Simon from the people; and both, as if delighting in carnage, preyed, demon-like, on the people and on each other. Some time after, they united in some sort with a view to the defence of the city. The utter detestation with which we read of these parties is mingled with other feelings as we contemplate their personal courage. Twice Titus had to save the tenth legion from destruction. It was fifteen days ere the third, or outer wall, was carried.

The fighting men of the two chiefs, together with a body of Idumæans, amounted to more than 23,000; and no sooner had the Romans constructed works, or advanced the storming engines, than they were assailed by showers of torches poured on them; while the daring of the one, and the discipline of the other, came into terrible conflict around the machines and the several points of operation. Once, Titus dashing on at the head of the flower of his cavalry, and cutting down twelve of the enemy with his own hand, rescued the work from the flames. As soon, however, as the largest engine, Nico—the conqueror—as the Jews called it, had made a breach, they retreated to the second wall, and the Romans having demolished the outer ramparts, and the northern quarter of the city, moved nearer, and occupied the spot known as the camp of the Assyrians.

Five days later, the second wall was taken, but recovered by the Jews—an event that elated them greatly. Mounds, however, were raised soon after, and towers fifty cubits high placed on them. Unwilling to destroy the city, Titus sent messages to John and Simon not to compel him to do so. They were deaf to his overtures. John, who had the command of the Antonia and the temple, had undermined the space between the fortress and the mound, and, to the consternation of the Romans, setting fire to the supports beneath, brought it down in ruins. After other events of this kind, evincing desperate



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determination on the part of the besieged, Titus decided on a wall of circumvallation. It was completed in three days, though 39 furlongs in length. Famine, awful famine, had begun. The city was silent. The dead were rotting in the streets. Two thousand Jews, who had escaped from it, were in one night ripped up by the Arabs and Syrians to see if they had swallowed gold. For twelve miles round not a tree was visible, the whole country having been cleared to renew the mounds. They were completed, and Titus, with a view to a final effort, addressed his soldiers, urging on them the necessity of gaining the Antonia, if they intended to master the city. The appeal was not in vain. "I cheerfully devote myself to you, Caesar," said Sabinus, a black emaciated Syrian. "I am the first to scale the wall." He did so, and, though he perished, others imitated his example, and in two or three days, the Antonia was in the hands of the Romans. They then attempted to follow the Jews into the temple, but were driven back after a conflict of ten or twelve hours, and obliged to restrict themselves to the castle. All, however, was now only a question of days and hours. Titus ordered the Antonia to be razed to its foundation, and thus insured an easy ascent into the city. The temple enclosure had become a citadel and a cemetery—the latter only so far as containing numbers sleeping the sleep of death. Worship was at an end. On the 17th of the month Panemus—the middle of July—the daily sacrifice ceased, and ceased till this hour! The Jews themselves had already set fire to the western colonnade of the temple. Battering rams were now applied to this part of the inner court, but the wall was firm. The Romans, therefore, in numbers mounted the galleries, and, amid the terrific conflict that ensued, their ensigns fell into the hands of the Jews, and they themselves were cut to pieces. Many, too, had perished in the flames of the galleries running towards the Xystus. The Jews had allured them on to these by retiring, after filling them beneath with dry wood, bitumen, and pitch. The northern colonnade, the day after, was burning as far as the eastern angle over the brook Kedron. This the Romans had set fire to; and now, as the western wing of the inner temple defied the battering-rams, and the Jews fought with lion-like courage on the roofs when the scaling-ladder was employed, and hurled their foes headlong, Titus ordered the gates to be set on fire. The

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silver coating soon melted, the destructive element raged, and, spreading right and left from the points of ignition, to the second and inner peristyle around the court of Israel, seized upon the galleries above, and threatened to envelope the besieged in a burning fiery furnace. The Jews stood dejected and motionless at this spectacle, and yet, consistent in their infatuation, did not submit. All that day and the next night the awful glare lighted up Jerusalem. The following morning, Titus ordered a division of his troops to extinguish it, and, in a council of his generals, expressed his determination to preserve, almost at any cost, *the sanctuary proper*, which as yet was intact. But it also was doomed to destruction. "Now, in revolving years, had arrived the fated day, the 10th of the month Loüs—5th August, A.D. 70—the very day on which the former temple had been burned by the king of Babylon;" and the Romans, having routed the Jews who attacked them while extinguishing the flames of the inner court, now, for *the first time* during the siege, penetrated even to the sanctuary.

At this moment a soldier snatched a brand from the blazing timber, and, without orders or any authority, threw it in at a small golden door on the north, leading into the apartments that surrounded the holy place and the holiest of all. Soon the flames burst forth. The Jews beheld it with horror, and raised a loud long wail to heaven. Titus was at rest in his tent; but the moment the tidings reached him, starting up, he rushed out, just as he was, to avert the catastrophe. It was too late. He shouted, waved his hands, did what he could to arrest the fury of his soldiers, but both ears and eyes were closed; and the Romans in the rear animating those in front to hurl in their lighted torches, nothing was left for him but to witness the final scene. He and his generals gazed with astonishment on the interior of the sanctuary while the flames were feeding on the adjacent chambers. Another effort he made at this point was fruitless. Even those who attended him frustrated his purpose by secretly setting fire to the holy place.

Meanwhile, reckless of life, the Jews, armed and unarmed, fell by thousands. Heaped up around the altar, down whose steps ran streams of blood, were crowds of human victims, who perhaps preferred death on the spot where other sacrifices had

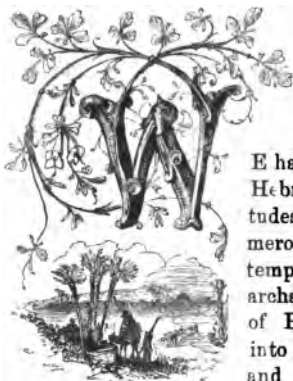
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for ages been offered, but would be offered no more. The whole Mount was covered with the dead. From the upper and lower city, still filled with famishing numbers that had at first come up to the feast of the passover—from the Scopus, from the Mount of Olives, from the Hill of Evil Counsel—all eyes were turned to the temple, now, as it were, in its final agonies. Another and another awful groan echoed by the mountains! The torrent of blood boils as it flows. The valley of Jehoshaphat is dyed with it. The subterraneous vaults roar with the blast coming up from their chill depths. It rushes round the whole of Moriah, and carries along the flames with the howl of a tempest. They rise in one vast mass to the heavens. It is the fulfilment of our Lord's words. It is the woe of another Jesus, the son of Ananus, uttered four years before—"A voice from the east; a voice from the west; a voice from the four winds; a voice against Jerusalem and the sanctuary; a voice against bridegrooms and brides; a voice against all the people." Their house was indeed left unto them desolate. Bezetha, Acra, Ophel, and finally the upper city, Zion, were given up to pillage, slaughter, and fire. By the beginning of September, Jerusalem was a heap of smoking ruins.

In front of the eastern gates of the temple, the Romans sacrificed to their ensigns, and with their acclamations saluted Titus as *Imperator*, in virtue of his awful triumphs; while, in the final overthrow, looking at the towers on the northern wall of the city, he exclaimed, "Surely we fought with God on our side, and God it was who brought the Jews down from their bulwarks; for what could human hands or engines avail against them?" Yes, they were given up by the God of their fathers. Having forsaken him and rejected his well-beloved Son, they were now rejected. More than a million of persons, from first to last, perished. Nearly a hundred thousand were taken prisoners. Their own divisions destroyed them; and thus the temple of Herod, in all its magnificence, eighty-six years only from the re-construction—and the city, with its palaces and bulwarks, enveloped in furlongs of fire—were consumed as a holocaust to the offended justice and the insulted majesty of the God of truth.

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WE have followed the fortunes of the Hebrew forefathers through vicissitudes no less interesting than numerous and diverse. First, we contemplated the simplicity of patriarchal life on the fruitful uplands of Palestine. Then we went down into Egypt with Abraham, Joseph, and Jacob, and saw somewhat of

Hebrew life in the luxuriant valley of the Nile. Ascending thence with the liberated sons of Israel, we passed with them forty years in the wilderness. At length, crossing the Jordan in the ranks of Joshua, we witnessed the conquest and partition of Canaan. The divine promise has been fulfilled. Israel is in possession of its inheritance. At this point, we resume the thread of our narrative.

A preliminary question demands a few words. At what date in the world's history do we stand, and what is the length of the period of which we are about to speak? The science of chronology is at present undergoing a revolution. Positive statements must not be rashly hazarded, nor must novelties be assumed as necessarily true. Equally improper would it be to leave the reader in ignorance respecting the views of eminent scholars in regard to chronological calculations. The dates given in the margin of our English Bible come to us with no higher sanction than that of human learning. That which scholarship has taught, scholarship may modify. If Usher and Hales have received respectful

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audience, why should we close our ears to Lepsius and Bunsen? The latter, placing the Exodus in the reign of Menephthah, in the year of 1314 before Christ, makes the passage of the Jordan by Joshua to have taken place in 1274. Accordingly, the death of that distinguished general must be dated in 1268. Here, then, we have the point at which the present chapter of the history commences. The length of the period which it covers is not easily determined. The common chronology makes it to extend from 1425 to 1120. A less duration is espoused by Lepsius. Finding 300 years between the building of Solomon's temple (1015) and the Exodus (1314), he sees reason to curtail the period of the Judges to 169 years. His statement is as follows:—

Length of the interval from the Exodus to Solomon's temple, 300 years.  
These 300 years are made up in the following manner:—

	YEARS.
From the Exodus to the passage of the Jordan . . . . .	40
From the entrance into Canaan to the end of the interval of disunion after Joshua's decease (7 + 18) . . . . .	25

## THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES:—

	YEARS.	
Dominion of Chushan-rishathaim . . . . .	8	13
Othniel's Judgeship . . . . .	5	
Dominion of Moab . . . . .	18	23
Ehud . . . . .	5	
Dominion of Jabin . . . . .	20	25
Deborah . . . . .	5	

## DOMINION OF MIDIAN:—

Gideon . . . . .	17	20
Abimelech . . . . .	3	

## PARALLEL DATES FOR

### WESTERN JORDAN. EASTERN JORDAN.

Tola . . . . .	23	} 48	Jair . . . . .	22	} 18	} 46	48
Ibzan . . . . .	7		Dominion of	Ammon			
Elon . . . . .	10						
Abdon . . . . .	8		Jephthah . . . . .				

## DOMINION OF THE PHILISTINES:—

Samson . . . . .	8	40
Eli . . . . .	20	
Samuel . . . . .	12	

## THE EARLY DAYS OF THE MONARCHY TO

### THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE:—

Saul . . . . .	22	66
David . . . . .	41	
Solomon . . . . .	3	

Total from the Exodus to the Temple 300\*

169 years.

\* The author of the book of Judges does not seem to have meant to give a

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If, now, we cast an eye on the West and on the East, we learn that at the time of Joshua's conquest of Palestine, Egypt had lost her ascendancy, and that the dominion of the world was transferred to Mesopotamia. In the depression of Egypt we may find a reason of the exodus, for the safety of Israel during their wanderings in the wilderness, and for the comparative ease with which they subdued Palestine. We do not assign this as the cause of these events, but merely as means employed by Providence for its own wise and benign purposes. In the same manner, the power of Nineveh, in the period of the Judges, was directed by the Almighty in such a way as to punish the Hebrews for their apostasy. The Assyrian dominion over

chronological history of the period; which, indeed, extends beyond his narrative into the first book of Samuel. Rather, he selects times and incidents which are fitted to serve his purpose by illustrating the doctrine of a merciful yet retributory Providence. Other facts are passed over with a bare mention. We must not, therefore, expect to find strict chronological sequences in the book. Yet it may be well to add to the view given by Bunsen, the following, which better corresponds with received opinions.

		YEARS OF SLAVERY.	YEARS OF FREEDOM.
iii. 8—11	under Assyria	8	40
iii. 12—30	„ Moab	18	80
iv. 2, 3; v. 31	„ Jabin	20	40
vi. 1	„ Midian	7	—
viii. 28	„ Gideon	—	40
ix. 22	„ Abimelech	3	.
x. 1, 2	„ Tola	23	.
x. 8	„ Jair	22	.
xiii. 1—xvi. 31	„ Samson and Eli	20	.
		121	+ 200=321

### SYNCHRONOUS GOVERNMENTS IN PERMEA.

	YEARS.
x. 8. Tyranny of Ammon	18
xii. 7. Jephthah judge	6
xii. 8—13. Ibsan, Elon, Abdon	25

In 1 Kings vi. 1, it is said that Solomon began to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign and the 480th year after the Exodus. With this aid, the dates stand thus:—

	YEARS.
Wanderings in the wilderness	40
Under Joshua, in all	17
Judges to Samson's death	301
„ Eli's death	20
Hence to the conquest of the Philistines under Samuel	20
Hence to the death of Saul	38
The reign of David	40
Portion of Solomon's reign	4

From the Exodus to the building of the temple 480

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Western Asia began in 1273. It went on increasing in strength and glory for more than half a century, that is, to the death of Semiramis in 1222. From that time the Assyrian empire began to sink into the luxurious effeminacy of oriental courts; yet for centuries it retained its ascendancy over Western Asia, and extended its baneful influence to Palestine. In the interval, it would also appear to have subjugated Egypt. In order to reach the Nile, Assyria had to pass through Canaan. Accordingly, that country was reduced to subjection. The conquest was effected in the commencement of the period of the Judges. Hence is it that we find Chushan-rishathaim in the land. That soldier, whose name, according to Bunsen, signifies Satrap of Mesopotamia, was the servant of Ninus, the prosperous monarch of Nineveh. Having made a breach in the wall formed by the Eastern tribes of Israel, for the protection of the Western, he passed the Jordan, and, as a preliminary to the conquest of Egypt, compelled Palestine to bear the yoke of Assyria. That yoke was, ere long, thrown off, and Palestine recovered her independence. Yet could she not escape from the hands of Assyria. Anticipating the policy found so effectual by Rome—the policy whose motto is *divide et impera*, “divide and you will conquer”—the Assyrian potentates devised means to set the Western Asiatics in conflict one with another. Hence is it that we find Israel successively attacked by their neighbours on the north, the south, the east, and the west. Thus assailed on all sides, the ark of Jehovah did not perish. God’s people were punished, but not destroyed. In judgment, God remembered mercy. If the punishment was divine, not less divine was the preservation. Thus the chosen people were led forward to the great issues fore-ordained for them by the Almighty.

For a few years after the death of Joshua, Israel enjoyed repose in the newly acquired land. But the seeds of trouble were already sown. Unlike Moses, Joshua left no successor. When he died, the reins of government fell to the ground. A certain priority seems to have been conceded to the tribe of Judah, but apparently only for special occasions.\* Whatever authority this precedence may have involved, it was by no means universal. The national unity, which had been consolidated under the pressure of affliction and the strong hand

\* Judges i. 1, seq.

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of Moses, was weakened and well-nigh destroyed by the distribution of the several tribes over the surface of the country, and the relaxing influences of success and prosperity. It is not easy to conjecture how it came to pass that Joshua made no arrangement for the future government of the people. The example of Moses, and the requirements of the case, could scarcely have failed to suggest to Joshua the nomination of a successor. Yet no successor was nominated. Did the omission arise from an already growing disorganisation, which Joshua had not the power to withstand? Not improbably tribal jealousy, not improbably an unwise love of individual independence, may have made the appointment of a successor impossible. Scattered over the soil, and divided by self-seeking, the Israelites were weak when the death of Joshua left them without a head; and the weakness which then had grown from division would make continual increase as the years flowed on, for every tribe desired ascendancy, and every individual stood on his own rights. Under these circumstances, the problem of self-government, always difficult, had to be worked out at a fearful disadvantage. No wonder that failure ensued. In its civil relations, a nation is not born in a day. Liberty is the offspring of experience. The experience may, perhaps must, involve suffering. Civil freedom is a precious jewel, and can be had only at a great cost. Israel is not yet prepared for national independence. Generations, if not centuries, of endurance must pass ere the era of true liberty can come. The immediate future is heavy with threatening clouds. Darkness still hangs on the horizon when the whole period of the Judges has come to a close; and the solution of the difficulty of self-government proved to be a king. Only under its earliest monarchs did Israel succeed in combining personal freedom and security with national unity and national prosperity.

So strong seem to have been the repellant forces of society in the very beginning of the era of which we write, that it is difficult to understand how the national elements held together. The cohesion would have been impossible but for the conservative influence of religion. In their worship of Jehovah, all the tribes, and all the members of the tribes of Israel, had a bond no less powerful than common. What so cementing as veneration and divine love? A common altar is even more



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binding than a common soil. Those who recognise one God easily blend into one people. The sap of every nationality is its faith. But what faith so pure—what faith so strong—what faith so uniting, as faith in Jehovah? Israel could do no other than remain one, so long as its children were true to the Lord God of their fathers. Yet this bond of union, like all other cementing influences, needed culture. Some culture the bond did receive. Common religious usages prevailed; \* a “house of God” † existed in the land; Divine counsel was sought. ‡ The facts implicate a priesthood. § Indeed, priests and Levites are expressly mentioned. ¶ By prophets || also, and by celestial messengers, ¶¶ God held communion with the people. These mementoes of the one God and the one faith, which formed the essence of Hebrewism, must have wrought powerfully for the conservation of the national unity. Yet far less numerous, and far less weighty, were these conservative forces, than such as did not prove too efficacious in the days of David, Solomon, and Rehoboam. Where was the altar common to all the people? What imposing ceremonial pressed the idea of their national unity into the hearts of the several tribes? As yet, no city had been honoured with the epithet of “holy,” by the suffrages of all Israel. As yet, the three annual visits to the great religious centre had not begun. As yet, the ritual was undeveloped. The religion of the nation lay in embryo. Scarcely more than the first germs of the Mosaic law had made their appearance; nor was the prevalence of confusion and blood favourable to their growth. If the civil power of the Commonwealth was weak, its religious power was not strong. Indeed, it is only with considerable latitude that the term Commonwealth can be applied to the nation in its state of incipient or advanced disintegration in the days of the Judges.

The actual government of the land clearly indicates its own weakness and insufficiency. The rule was that of Judges. The term may be taken as nearly equivalent with our word governor, only it looks to the administration of justice, rather than to the exercise of what is ordinarily meant by rectoral functions. Indeed, in simpler states of society, and especially

\* Judges i. 1.

† Judges xx. 18 ; 1 Sam. i. 3, 9 ; ii. 22.

‡ Judges xx. 18.

§ Judges xviii. 19, 30 ; xix. 1 ; 1 Sam. i. 12, seq.

¶ Judges vi. 8.

¶¶ Judges ii. 1 ; vi. 11.

in oriental lands, the administration of a certain rude justice is the chief and almost the sole rectoral function of which the bulk of the people are made sensible. But the justice thus administered is the dictate of conscience, or the requirement of impulse, rather than the behest of law or the determination of wisdom. Often, too, he that gives the sentence sees to its execution, if he does not even carry it into effect himself. Thus the judge may sink into the executioner, or rise into the soldier. Accordingly, the judges of Israel were mostly men of the sword rather than the robe. Their appearance also was occasional. Called out by pressing emergencies, they struck a blow for liberty, retained power a few years, and then were known no more. Patriots and heroes were they, not rulers. Impelled by the Spirit of Jehovah, they arose and smote his enemies, the oppressors of his people; and having performed their task, they were gathered to their fathers, leaving behind them nothing but an imperishable name. The wave fell as soon as it had surged. The disinterestedness of these men we must admire. In self-forgetfulness they yet remain unsurpassed, if even they are equalled. As nobly unselfish, they are witnesses of the power of the Mosaic religion in these, its earliest shoots and unripe fruit. The attestation suffices of itself to prove the divinity of the religion of Moses. As selfishness is sin, so is unselfishness holiness. Of every truly disinterested soul, God himself is the light and the power; and that religion must be divine which produces self-forgetful love. But where may we look for self-renunciation equal to that of the Hebrew judges? Nowhere is it to be found unless in the Hebrew prophets, and in Him whom all the judges foreshadowed, all the prophets foretold, in whom all minor lights were at once centred and eclipsed.

Yet, great as were the judges in their own specific qualities, and for the purposes for which they were raised up, they were incapable of uniting into one compact frame the disjointed members of Israel, and of establishing in the land the permanent authority of law. Scarcely had the sceptre succeeded to the sword, when both fell from the hands by which they were wielded. Never were they resumed, though in other parts of the land other heroes became first deliverers, and then rulers, for a brief space of time. The only constituted and permanent authority was that of the priesthood.

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but in days of conflict and in scenes of blood, the ministers of religion are as powerless as they are out of place.

While these causes of weakness prevailed in the heart of Israel, its condition without was both peculiar and unsatisfactory. The Hebrews were a colony in a foreign land, rather than a people at home. They had, indeed, by a sudden onslaught, and by desperate valour, made themselves masters of the territory. They could not be expelled; as little could they prevail and rule. Their condition resembled that of a storming party, whose furious valour has borne them into the citadel of their foe, whom now they confront face to face, and combat hand to hand, in deadly and unappeasable feud. For on all sides the ancient inhabitants of Canaan remained, still holding possession of much of their territory. It is impossible to exterminate a native population. What are called wars of extermination are little else than senseless words. No nation was ever yet devoured by the sword. Celt, Saxon, and Norman still live together on our British soil, whatever certain books of fable, called histories, may say to the contrary. In agreement with these statements, the Book of Judges, in its earlier lines, makes no enumeration of the nations of Canaan which survived the destructive blows inflicted by the iron hand of Joshua and his associates. From the details there given, it is clear that even after their great leader's death, the Hebrews formed little else than an army of occupation in Palestine. Scarcely can we point to a district of the country of which they had exclusive possession. In the sacred narratives we find the ancient inhabitants in the south and in the north, in the east and in the west; they fill the plains, they occupy the hills, in the valleys they lie in ambush, and from no few of the strongholds they defy the bold invader.

Thus surrounded, the Israelites, though conquerors, were hardly masters. Successful enough for spoil and treasure, they were unequal to the bloody work of extermination. Saturated with the fat things of the land, they soon began to think of enjoyment rather than conflict. They, therefore, tolerated an enemy whom they could hardly destroy; and, beginning with endurance, they ere long ended with amity. Lured by the luxuries which they saw on every side, they gave their hearts to pleasure, and, fascinated by the daughters of the land, they too readily became the willing captives of

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their foes. Intermarriage with idolaters engendered idolatry in Israel. The worship of Jehovah was first disregarded, and then renounced. Baal and Ashtaroth received the services which were due and had been paid to the Creator of heaven and earth. The obscene rites of the grove superseded the holy observances of the tabernacle. In a word, all the lines of distinction which had marked out the monotheist from the polytheist began to vanish. Only in a few great souls did the vestal fire of God's altar continue to burn. It almost seemed as if true religion had disappeared from the earth. Had the Heavenly Father, then, called the faithful Abraham in vain? Had all the signal array of his power, and display of his grace, been made in Egypt, in Sinai, and in Palestine in vain? Was the Almighty's arm shortened, that it could neither save nor punish? Was God's hand powerless to vindicate his own honour and avenge his own cause?

An answer came in one of the darkest tragedies ever enacted on the surface of the globe. The outlines of the tragedy are given in the canonical book bearing the name of the Judges. Beyond a doubt, the book is historical. A deep and vivid interest attaches to much of its contents. Those sketches, of a rude and almost semi-barbarous life, attest the realities of which they speak. This, too, is a voice from the great and multiform heart of man. Equally those effects of divine inspiration, though little accordant with the requirements of more cultivated times, are not only such as might be expected, but also such as were both needed and effectual in times of apostasy and civil confusion. The Divine Spirit ever adapts itself, no less to the instruments it employs, than to the wants of an age and the purposes it intends to accomplish. Heroism, as well as prophecy, is a gift of inspiration. When needful for the execution of his designs, God nerves the arm of a Gideon, fires the soul of an Isaiah, and sanctifies the heart of a John.

The drama of God's Nemesis in the Book of Judges is imperfectly recorded. We have there only fragments of the terrible reality: of nearly a society of the deliverers mentioned, very little is said. These, consequently, we are compelled to pass. Our thoughts, then, must be centred on Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Abimelech, Jephthah, Samson, Eli, and Samuel. In order to gather information respecting Eli and

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Samuel, we must go beyond "the Book of Judges," and enter "the First Book of Samuel." Between these two scriptures there stands a pastoral of exquisite beauty, called "the Book of Ruth." A pleasing contrast is afforded to the shadows of the previous history by that simple and touching narrative.

Our sources of information are disproportionate one to another. Exact symmetry cannot in consequence be observed in the treatment of the subject. Semewhat confused, too, are the materials, and, as confused, they the better image forth a period of disturbance and anarchy. When we have added, that in this part of sacred Scripture there are miscellaneous matters of some importance and great interest, but which, as not belonging to it, cannot be embodied in this historical sketch, we have given pregnant reasons why the reader should turn from our poor words to the very words of the Bible, which have now lived for above two thousand years, and which will continue to live as long as man has religious wants and sympathies.

There is one thought which stands out in bold relief in the history of the Judges. It is a thought which is interwoven in the whole texture of Scripture. It is a thought which is ever finding new illustrations in our human experience. The thought has received from the inspired lips of Isaiah this utterance :

"Say ye to the righteous—well!"

Woe to the wicked!—ill!"

Those words, "righteous and well!" "wicked and ill!" are the key-notes of the ever-recurring retributions of the age of the Judges, all the great acts of which are only repeated alternations of "well with the righteous," and "ill with the wicked." The promises of God are all conditions. An emphatic "if," expounded or understood, precedes alike every threatening and every promise uttered by Moses. Had the people, after the death of Joshua, been wise, so as to listen to the warnings and encouragements, the commands and prohibitions, addressed to them by their divinely-commissioned teachers, they would have received the blessing of God, and lived in the enjoyment of increasing prosperity. Doubtless, their position was one of difficulty; but not less singular had their privileges been, and not less emphatic was the aid which awaited them from the grace of the Almighty, had they possessed a heart to listen to

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his will. Instead, they began with disobedience, and they ended with apostasy. Ruin ensued. The consequence was inevitable. Faithful alike to his word and to his laws, God inflicted terrible punishments on those ungrateful and rebellious men. The penalties seem to have had a salutary effect, for toward the termination of the period, the social confusion abates; and though the people are still infatuated enough to prefer a temporal king to the One Monarch of heaven and earth, yet streaks of light relieve the horizon of the future, and the age of Samuel is so far improved as to render possible the glories of the days of David and Solomon.

We have said that the divine punishments were inevitable. So they proved a few years after Joshua's decease. There may have been in Israel some who, notwithstanding their own and the national guilt, dwelt at ease, if they did not scorn the words of reproof and warning. The apprehensions of those who still retained a sense of religion, they attributed to weakness, if not imbecility. Strong and firm was their hold on the land. If the Canaanites were troublesome, let them perish. And for foreign countries, what had Israel to fear? Egypt was weak, Nineveh was remote, and the East Jordanic tribes defended the only exposed frontier. Nevertheless, ere long, intelligence arrives that a general of the great Ninus is making his way victoriously through the north of Palestine, laying all waste with fire and sword. Soon do his forces reach the south. Opposition proves nugatory. Chushan-rishathaim is triumphant. The independence of Israel is lost. During eight long years the land is tributary to the great potentate of the East. Suffering, however, begets sorrow, and sorrow issues in repentance. A cry for mercy and deliverance went up from the broad surface of the country. Willing to give his children a trial, the Heavenly Father opened his ears to the accents of contrition, and resolved to send them succour.

### OTHNIEL.

There was one Othniel, of the tribe of Judah, a young man of mark, distinguished for his prowess. By an exercise of that prowess he had gained his wife; for when the royal city of Kirjath-Sepher had thrown off the chains imposed by Joshua,\* and resisted the utmost efforts of the Hebrews to gain posses-

\* Josh. x. 38.

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sion of it, Caleb, to whom it belonged, was fain to offer his niece as a reward for its reduction. Othniel undertook and accomplished the task.\* Him God selected to deliver his enslaved and repentant people. Filled with God's own Spirit, the heroic Othniel prevailed against the Mesopotamian satrap. Chusathaim was driven out of the coasts of Israel, and the people recovered at once their independence and their prosperity.

### EHUD.

With the return of ease and abundance, disobedience returned. Again the anger of God was kindled. The blow came from an unexpected quarter. Who could have thought that Moab, so recently subdued, could have the power to inflict serious damage on Israel? But the Almighty never lacks instruments. It may be presumed that the strengthening of Moab, to which the sacred narrative refers,† took place by means of the defeated Assyrians, who though too weak to conquer Palestine, were strong enough to assist, as they were willing enough to urge, the Moabites to revenge their wrongs on their prosperous neighbours. Impelled and supported by the Mesopotamian power, Eglon, king of Moab, formed a confederacy of Western Asiatics, including the children of Ammon and Amalek, and fell on Israel with such force and fury as to subjugate the country. Establishing his head-quarters at Jericho, Eglon made all Israel tributary. For eighteen years the Hebrews bore the Moabite yoke. The penitence that ensued conciliated the Divine favour. A deliverer appeared in Ehud, of the tribe of Benjamin, a man equally dexterous and brave. Availing himself of the cover afforded in his appointment to bear the annual tribute to Eglon, Ehud, on a certain pretext, procured a solitary audience of the king, when he smote him dead at Gilgal, near Jericho. The blow seems to have struck terror into the Moabites. Resolved to profit by their alarm, Ehud hastened to the centre of Palestine, and raising forces in a very brief space, seized the fords of the Jordan. The Moabite forces garrisoning the land, deprived of their national head, and fearful of their own safety, hastened to the spot in order to cross the river and repair home. There, however, to their amazement, they found Ehud and his troops. The Moabites came up in scattered

\* Josh. xv. 18, seq.; Judges i. 9, seq.

† Judges iii. 12.

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chments, and so fell an easy prey to the eager swords of the Hebrews. Again the independence of Israel was red.

### DEBORAH AND BARAK.

As long as Ehud lived, the Israelites remained faithful to their duty. On his death, however, they reverted to their former evil courses. They had their reward. The waters of Shechem had long been the centre of a powerful Canaanite kingdom, the capital of which was Hazor, and the king, Jabin. Hazor had been conquered by Joshua, and Jabin put to death. The Canaanites, however, recovered their liberty. With liberty came power, and power begat a desire for revenge. Not improbably the desire was sharpened by Mesopotamian intrigues. Certainly, Jabin the second was a formidable assailant, if, as may be supposed, the rest of his forces were proportioned to the nine hundred chariots of iron which he brought into the field. Israel succumbed before so mighty a foe, and for twenty years suffered grievous oppression. Deliverance was granted to contrition, and the deliverance came by the hand of a woman. Deborah was honoured with this mission. Like Joan of Arc, Deborah possessed a soul fully alive to the injuries of her country, fully open to the impulses of Divine inspiration, and strung to the intensest enthusiasm and the most daring valour. In one particular, she far transcended the French heroine. She was a prophetess, and as such, could utter high thoughts and noble deeds inspiring words. From her seat of judicial power in Mount Ephraim, she called upon her fellow countrymen to rise. Electing as her general, Barak, and appointing Mount Tabor for a rendezvous, she took the field in person, her immediate design being to entice Jabin from the north into the plain of Jezreel. Succeeding in her object, and apparently placing Barak, his general, between the troops she led and those which he commanded at Tabor, she fell on the Canaanites with such eagerness and force, that, notwithstanding their numbers and strength, they were put to flight. A terrible slaughter ensued, for the discomfited foe was pursued back even to the northern regions whence he had come. Sisera himself, taking refuge in a Kenite tent, was put to death by its mistress, Deborah.



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The victory was celebrated by a triumphal ode, of almost unequalled excellence, so various are its sentiments—passing from the familiar to the sublime, from the scornful to the tender, and interweaving its divine colours with rapid changes and broad contrasts, so as to present a living panorama of the battle, the defeat, and the triumph. In all heathen antiquity, there is not so fine an ode. However degraded the period of the judges was, great souls lived then, and equally did there exist high literary culture; otherwise the deed celebrated could not have been performed, nor could the celebrating poem have been produced. The ode is a picture of the age. In some sense, the ode is the best picture of the age. We must, therefore, endeavour to set it before our readers in an easily intelligible form.

### DEBORAH'S SONG OF TRIUMPH.

With true lyric ardour, the poet at once rushes into the heart of her subject in the introduction :—

The princes of Israel came forth !  
The people willingly took their posts !  
Praise ye Jehovah.

Hear, ye kings ; listen, ye princes ;  
I, yea I, will sing to Jehovah,

I will strike the lyre to Jehovah, Israel's God.

Then comes a tacit comparison of the recent achievement with the grand event of the national history, namely, the going-forth of the people from Sinai under the leadership of the Almighty.

Jehovah ! when thou wentest forth from Seir,  
When thou proceedest from the land of Edom,  
The earth shook, and even the heavens dropped,  
Yea, the clouds dropped water ;  
Mountains quaked before Jehovah,  
Even Sinai before Jehovah, Israel's God.

The subject of the poem is naturally preceded by a brief and graphic account of the miserable state of the oppressed Israelites immediately before the victory.

In the days of Shamgar, Anath's son,  
In the days of Jael,  
Still were the high roads,  
Travellers sought out by-ways ;  
Still were the hamlets in Israel, still were they,

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Until I arose, I, Deborah,  
Until I arose, a mother in Israel.

They chose new gods,  
Then was there war in the door-ways :

Was there a shield or a spear seen among the forty thousand in Israel ?

The depressed condition of her people calls up in the poet's mind a lively sense of gratitude towards those who came to their succour.

My heart beats towards the rulers of Israel,  
The volunteers among the people :  
Bless ye Jehovah !

Her own gratitude the prophetess wishes to infuse into others, especially those "who live at home at ease," and travel in safety as a consequence of the victory.

Ye who ride on white asses,\*  
Ye who repose on carpets,  
Ye who travel along the road,  
Sing !

A contrast ensues between the former peril, when the maidens, going forth to the suburbs to draw water, were liable to an attack from the foe, and the present state, when the jubilant sounds of grateful worship are heard on every side.

Instead of the voice of the bowmen among the water drawers,  
We hear,

"Rehearse the mercy of Jehovah,  
His mercy towards the villagers of Israel !"

A marked proof of the present tranquillity is given in a single fact that, as aforetime, the people crowd the gateways of the town for business and for recreation.

Now they go down to the gates, the people of Jehovah !

In the finest spirit of poetry, the lyrist utters a vivid anticipation of the victory, calling on herself to celebrate the triumph, and on her general to make sure of the prisoners he has taken.

Awake ! awake ! Deborah,  
Awake ! awake !  
Sing the song !  
Up ! Barak,  
Lead away the captives !  
Son of Abinoam.

\* White asses are rare in the East, and, consequently, being used only by the opulent, are a sign of luxury.

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The gathering of the tribes is described, together with the unworthy absence of some.

The heart of Ephraim is against Amalek ;  
Next is Benjamin with his clans ;  
Rulers came down from Machir ;  
And from Zebulon those who bear the staff ;  
The chiefs of Issachar are with Deborah ;  
Issachar and Barak rush down into the plain ;  
Near Reuben's streams, what noble resolves !  
Why liest thou among the pens ,  
To hear the bleatings of the flocks ?  
While near Reuben's streams are noble resolves !  
Beyond the Jordan remain Gilead and Dan.  
Why tarriest thou among the ships ?  
Asher sits on the shore of the sea,  
And encamps in his creeks !  
Zebulon and Naphtali lavish their blood  
On the high plains of Tabor !

The collecting of the forces of the heathen is followed by a brief description of the battle, and of the aid given to Israel by a tempest, which beat down the enemy and swept them away.

There came kings :  
They fought, the kings of Canaan fought,  
At Taanach, near the waters of Megiddo ;  
What was their booty ?  
From heaven they fought,  
The stars in their courses fought against Sisera !  
The stream Kishon swept them away,  
The stream of slaughter ! the stream Kishon !  
O my soul, thou trodest down the mighty !  
Hear the stamping of the horses  
From the chase—the chase of the valiant !

Then comes an imprecation on Meroz, for lending no assistance to Israel.

Curse Meroz ! says the messenger of Jehovah ;  
Curse, doubly curse its inhabitants !  
For they came not to the aid of Jehovah,  
To the aid of Jehovah among heroes.

A contrast arises in the conduct of Jael.

Praised above all women be Jael,  
The wife of Heber, the Kenite ;  
Above all women in the tent  
Let her be praised.

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Water he asked, milk she gave;  
In a lordly bowl she handed him cream.  
Her hand she stretched to the nail,  
Her right hand to the hammer;  
She smote Sisera,  
She bruised his head and pierced his temples;  
At her feet he sank, fell, lay;  
At her feet he sank and fell;  
Where he sank, there he lay—  
A corpse!

Then comes one of the boldest and most successful of poetic lights. Sisera's mother, anxious about her son's delay, is introduced as asking, "Where is he?" "Where can he be?"

Through the window she looks and wails,  
The mother of Sisera through the lattice:  
"Why is his chariot so long in coming?  
Why are the wheels of his chariot so slow?"  
Her wise women answer—yea, she answers herself—  
"They are taking, they are dividing the spoil;  
One, two maidens, for each man;  
Spoil of vari-coloured garments for Sisera!  
Spoil of vari-coloured garments!  
Well wrought! fine hues!  
A neckerchief embroidered on both sides!"

Here, with the utmost abruptness, yet with the utmost effect, the ode terminates in these words:—

Thus perish all thine enemies, O Jehovah!  
And may those who love thee be as the sun when he goes forth in his strength.

## GIDEON.

The events last described seem to have been mainly confined to middle and northern Palestine. The next act in this manifold drama carries the thoughts to the south. The same sin brought the same punishment, and the same repentance issued in the same grace. The hand of the divine instrument came from the south-east. An old foe, Midian, was impelled to execute the divine vengeance, while thinking only of the gratification of his own enmity. Here, again, a powerful confederacy was formed against Israel. Not only the Midianites and Amalekites, but "the children of the east," joined together to assail the Hebrews.\* "The children of the east"

\* Judges vi. seq.

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is a phrase of import wide enough to comprehend the Mesopotamians. If we may not positively declare that Nineveh took part in the aggression, we seem warranted to think it probable that the Assyrian Empire was not without a direct influence in the war. The numbers, the array, and the devastation seem to have been on a far larger scale than is compatible with the limited resources of Midian and Amalek. Thus speaks the sacred historian : " They encamped against them " (the Israelites), " and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. - For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude ; both they and their camels were without number ; and they entered into the land to destroy it. And Israel was greatly impoverished." Their utter ruin, however, was not to be allowed. God chose a deliverer. It was Gideon, son of Joash, of the tribe of Manasseh.

While engaged in threshing his corn secretly, for fear of the Midianites, this Hebrew Cincinnatus received a visit from the Most High, and was commissioned " to save Israel from the hand of the Midianites." " And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." As a proof of his strength, and as an encouragement towards the great enterprise, Gideon was instructed and enabled to destroy in one night the altar of Baal possessed by his father, and to erect in its stead an altar in honour of Jehovah. The conflict against Midian soon followed. If, however, the Israelites got the upper hand by their own efforts, they could scarcely fail to be elated. On previous occasions, success had begotten pride, and pride had alienated the heart from God. The Almighty, therefore, willing to employ every expedient in the education of his people, resolved to reduce the number of the assailants so much as to leave no doubt whatever that the glory belonged to himself exclusively. Gideon's army, of two and thirty thousand, was reduced to three hundred. With this handful of men, the judge fell on the idolaters in the night, and put them to a complete route, which ended in the liberation of the land. Full of gratitude for the eminent service they had received, the men of Israel wished to confer hereditary power on their chieftain. With a noble disregard of self, too seldom, if ever,

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imitated in the world's history, Gideon refused the tempting offer, content with the simple consciousness of having, under divine aid, rescued his country from galling thralldom.

### ABIMELECH.

The glittering bauble of a crown was, however, too fascinating for Gideon's son, Abimelech. By intrigue with the Shechemites, Abimelech obtained a sum of money, which he employed in order to "hire vain and light persons," who should forward his selfish designs. In order to preclude rivalry, he slew his brothers, the sons of Gideon, to the number of seventy persons. Jotham, the youngest, alone escaped. Resolved, if possible, to prevent supreme power from being placed in the unworthy hands of Abimelech, he addressed his supporters in a parable which is equally beautiful and apposite, and which may be given as another imperishable monument of Hebrew literature, and another token and measure of the high culture of the times.

### JOTHAM'S PARABLE.

The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them ; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour kings and men of rank, and go to be promoted over the trees ? Then the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, and reign over us. But the fig-tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees ? Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. But the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth kings and men of rank, and go to be promoted over the trees ? Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow ; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and destroy the cedars of Lebanon.

The wisdom and the courage of Jotham were not a match for the bribes and the intrigues of Abimelech. The ambitious man reigned three years over Israel. His wickedness and folly, however, became intolerable. Factions arose in Shechem.

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Civil war ensued. From a usurper, Abimelech became a tyrant. His sanguinary measures multiplied revolt, and revolt provoked additional cruelty. At last he met with his merited fate; for while besieging the stronghold of Thebez, he received, from a stone hurled on his head by a woman's hand, a fatal blow. Ashamed of perishing ignominiously, he besought and received death at the hand of his armour-bearer. The death of Abimelech restored the commonwealth to its former condition.\*

The wickedness of Israel, however momentarily checked, continued to increase. A general defection from the worship of Jehovah was at once the cause and the consequence of the prevalent demoralisation. Idolatry came in like a flood: "the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines,"† usurped the honours which were due to the Creator alone. Never did any nation repay equal favours with equal ingratitude. No wonder "the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel." Yet how ready was he to forgive! His mercy was as wonderful as their rebellion. No sooner did they humble themselves under his mighty hand, than, to use the touching and emphatic words of the Bible, "his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel,"‡ and "the Father of all mercies" took his sorrowing children back into favour.

## JEPHTHAH.

If Western Palestine was thus weak, sinful, and disorganised, Eastern Palestine might well be a prey to the evils of apostasy and disorder; for its Hebrew population being smaller in proportion to the extent of territory, must therefore have lived more scatteredly over the soil, and been in consequence more exposed to contact with, and defilement from, its former idolatrous possessors; while in the open desert, which stretched along the uncertain line of its eastern frontier, roamed bands of pagan exiles, driven from their property by the invading Israelites, and thirsting for an opportunity to recover their lands and their homes. Of these, the Ammonites seem to have most retained a certain natural unity and strength. Acting in common with their idolatrous brethren, they had frequently

\* Judges vi.—ix.

† Judges x. 6.

‡ Judges x. 16.

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made their power felt by the Western Hebrews,\* and now formed a general confederacy against the Eastern.

Pressed on all sides by the combined though heterogeneous forces of their common foe, the Israelites were in great peril, and seemed to be approaching the crisis of their fate. Gilead, the centre of Perea, had been seized by the Ammonites, while the forces of Israel were compelled to take a position at Mizpeh, on the Eastern border. Could the idolaters be expelled? Could the worshippers of Jehovah re-capture their possessions? The question was momentous and urgent. The answer depended on the appearance of a leader. The heads of the tribes held back. A reward was offered: "Whoso will begin to fight against the children of Ammon, he shall be chief over all the inhabitants of Gilead."† God often chooses instruments which in men's eyes appear the most unlikely. There was a Gileadite who, in these troubled times and disturbed districts, had gained renown, as well as substance, as the head of a band of freebooters. Of illegitimate birth, he was driven from his father's home by the jealousy of the legitimate children, and had been compelled to resort to violence to procure subsistence. Turning the necessity into an opportunity, he had harassed his countrymen's enemies until he became a terror to the latter, and had conciliated the respect of the former. Jephthah heard of the offer of the headship of Israel, and resolved to claim the glittering prize. He collected the scattered forces, and reanimated the drooping spirits of Israel. Imparting his own enthusiasm to his troops, he fell on the Ammonites, and "smote them with very great slaughter."‡

In his eagerness for victory, Jephthah, on going out to battle, vowed that, if successful, he would on returning home "offer as a burnt-offering whatever came forth from the doors of his house to meet him." The indiscreet vow was sorely punished. Glad and proud of her father's achievements, his daughter, his only child, on hearing of his approach, "went out to meet him with timbrels and dances." At the sight, his heart sank within him; he wept, and rent his clothes, saying, "Alas! my daughter, thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back." With an exquisite simplicity of self-surrender, and a patriotism

\* Judges x. 9.

† Judges x. 18.

‡ Judges xi.



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of unsurpassed devotedness, the maiden answered: "My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which has proceeded out of thy mouth: forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon." The rest of the painful story must be told in the half-veiled and touching words of Scripture: "And she said unto her father, Let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows. And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months; and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed; and she knew no man. And it became a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, four days in a year."

The enemies of the Bible have put forth this incident as a proof that the religion of Moses was guilty of human sacrifices. The religion of Moses is in no way answerable for the act of Jephthah, be it good or bad, questionable or blame-worthy. The deed is simply recorded as other deeds of a dubious or reprehensible character; nor can any sanction for the deed be drawn from the fact that "the spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah,"\* and drove him to espouse the cause of his straitened countrymen. Roused of God to deliver Israel, he was aided of God to achieve the enterprise. Here his inspiration began and here it ended. To carry it further is mere assumption. Nay, rather should it be said that the vow was displeasing in the sight of Jehovah, who, to discourage what may have been a heathen prompting in Jephthah's soul, caused the offering to be far more precious than the hero imagined, or could have supposed. Thus the Divine Wiadom corrected a tendency, which, already too strong, might in the soul of the ruler of Israel have wrought effects disastrous no less to Israel than to Jephthah. The lesson was salutary in proportion to its cost. Blind zeal for God is punished by its own consequences. Headlong haste toward even desirable objects is terribly reprov'd. Men are never to surrender their judgments to their passions. Sacrifice, to be acceptable to

\* Judges xi. 29.

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God, must be maturely weighed and prudently tendered. "Be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil: be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter a word before God."\*

Jephthah's success provoked jealousy, and occasioned civil war. The Ephraimites had been invited by Jephthah to cross over to his aid against the idolaters. Though they left him to fight the battle of Israel alone, they imputed to him their own neglect as a crime. Probably they were averse to having a freebooter for their chief. Probably they feared a man rash enough to make a vow, and iron-hearted enough to execute a vow, which involved the sacrifice of his daughter, and that daughter his only child. However, they provoked him to a conflict, which proved disastrous to themselves. No wars are so embittered or so deadly as the war of kinsmen and clansmen. Gileadites, Ephraimites, Manassehites—all Israelites—were confusedly mixed together in the populations of the land, and in the collisions of the present quarrel. When Ephraim was defeated, they fled in order to cross the Jordan and hasten home. But Gilead had seized the fords. Yet who should say which was the pursuer and which the fugitive? A difference of pronunciation would supply a test. The Pereans, as a more mountainous and less cultivated people, thickened the sound of the letter *s* so as to make it equivalent to our *sh*, while the western tribes uttered it as a pure sibilant. When, then, the Gileadites seized an Ephraimite, and were met by the plea that he was one of themselves, they answered, "Say *Shibboleth*" (river, the Jordan). If *Sibboleth* was the reply, the sword did its work, and Hebrew blood was shed for a mere shade of a difference in pronunciation. "There fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand."†

This fact is as discreditable to Israel as it is painful to the human heart. The fact indeed is one of a class of records which, however Hebrew they may be, cannot endure the test of a Christian morality. Nevertheless, they appear in the Hebrew archives with the most entire absence of any consciousness of wrong. So appearing, they are unassailable witnesses of the simple and self-forgotten honesty that filled and ruled the mind of the narrators. Clearly, these are the unconscious utterances of a rude age, of such an age as the incidents chronicled imply,

\* Eccles. v. 1, 2.

† Judges xii. 6.

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of such an age as the general tenor of the history leads us to expect. Consequently, the record under consideration is not a fiction. A later age would have a gentler moral tone. That tone it would inevitably have infused into any fancy picture drawn by its hand of an earlier period. Now conscious of the wrong, the more cultivated writer would have veiled the wrong or softened it down. Even old writings would have burnished it up, had it not been more careful to preserve the past than to vindicate the national character. The rust that remains attests at once the antiquity and the credibility of the sacred narrative.

### SAMSON.

These internecine feuds prepared Israel for a new yoke. The Philistines next gained supreme power, and held it for a long series of years. Their cruel oppressions called forth an avenger. On the borders of their own country, there lived a family of the tribe of Dan, the name of whose head was Manoah. Out of that family it pleased Jehovah to raise a deliverer. Other judges had been called when they had grown to an adult age. Samson, the conquerer of the Philistines, was directly given of God. Born under special influence, he was educated for his high office. When he had reached man's estate, he commenced a series of deeds fitted alike to harass the foe of his country and to make himself dreaded. At length the Philistines took vigorous measures for his capture. Seducing his own countrymen, they got the hero into their hands, and bound him securely. But "the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands were melted from off his hands."\* Having thus freed himself from outward force, Samson went at large, and continued to inflict punishment on the oppressors of Israel. But he against whom war could prevail nothing, fell before the arts of a treacherous woman. Betrayed by Delilah, Samson fell into the hands of the Philistines, who "put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison-house."† Joy ran like lightning through all Philistia. To Dagon, the fish-god, is the capture due. To Dagon, therefore, the universal gratitude decrees a sumptuous sacrifice. The day

\* Judges xiii.—xvi.

† Judges xvi. 21.

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arrives. All the great men, all the beautiful women of the land, assemble at Gaza. The blind Samson is brought into the arena for contempt and for sport, as a bull to be baited before the princes and grandees of Spain. As the man of huge frame gropes his way into the arena, and carries his eyeless sockets round the jeering circle that crowd the amphitheatre, he silently calls unto the Lord, saying, "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." Then, taking hold of the two middle pillars, upon which the gallery stood, the one with his right hand, the other with his left,

"With horrible convulsion to and fro  
He tugged, he shook till down they came, and drew  
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,  
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,  
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, and priests,  
Their choice nobility and flower, not only  
Of this, but each Philistine city round,  
Met from all parts to solemnise this feast.  
Samson with these immix'd, inevitably  
Pulled down the same destruction on himself."\*

### ELI.

The deliverance wrought out by Samson may have been attended with a consolidating effect on the people and on their institutions. Certainly when we again come to a class of marked incidents, we find the priesthood a definite and, to some extent, organised body,† and we also find tokens of a political growth which foreshadows the well developed government of the early monarchy.‡ Yet the expansion and the strengthening of the Israelite polity in church and state could have been but tardy and fluctuating, if only because the Philistines still retained means to make their hostility felt, and to bring into danger the central interests of the nation. The fact finds an illustration during the sacerdotal administration of Eli. How long Eli had been judge as well as high-priest in Israel before the occurrence of the events about to be recited, we have no means of ascertaining. But in his old age, the high-

\* Milton's "Samson Agonistes"—one of the finest poems in any language.

† 1 Sam. i. ii. iii.

‡ 1 Sam. viii. ix.

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priest was flogged by Providence with a whip of scorpions, for neglect of parental duty which entailed dire evils on his sons, on the victims of their crimes, and on Israel at large. Those sons, availing themselves of their high position, and the opportunities for evil which hence arose, debased themselves and desecrated the offices of religion by violence, robbery, and licentiousness. In punishment of their sins, a fearful judgment was denounced on their father, on the express ground that when "his sons made themselves vile, he restrained them not." At the same time the Divine displeasure was declared against Hophni and Phinehas, the perpetrators of the misdeeds. The denunciation was rigidly carried into execution. Battle was joined between the Israelites and the Philistines. The fortune of the day declared against the former. Eager to retrieve their loss, the Hebrews fetched the ark from Shiloh, where it rested. The awful symbol struck terror into the Philistines. Seeing bondage impending over their heads, they took fresh courage from despair, and routed the army of Israel with great slaughter. In the rout, the ark was taken, and Hophni and Phinehas were slain. A fugitive hastened with the mournful intelligence to Shiloh, where Eli awaited news of the battle in intense solicitude. The blow was too heavy; the old man fell from his seat and died on the spot. His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, seized with the pangs of premature labour, died in giving birth to a son, who received a name distressingly indicative of the disastrous condition of the country, for with her dying lips she named the child "Icha-bod," saying, "The glory is departed from Israel."

Israel's God had, however, purposes of love respecting his people. Man's interests may vanish, but the cause of the Almighty is, like himself, imperishable. A new era was about to dawn. Out of the thick darkness, morning arose. For meanwhile a tender plant—a plant of the Lord's own right hand—had been growing up in the sanctuary, and under the choicest influences of religion. Samuel, who from a child had lent a reverent ear to every word of God, came forward in the critical emergency, and showed that piety is the best guide and support of political wisdom, patriotism, and valour. Uniting in himself the properties of a prophet, a judge, and a general, he employed his high and varied resources for the redemption of Israel, and the development of the true

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elements of her greatness. Knowing that justice is the root of government, even as religion is its sap, he administered the former with systematic care, and encouraged and fostered the latter with ceaseless attention.\*

While, however, the ark of God remained in the hands of the Philistines, and while his people suffered under their idolatrous yoke, social regeneration was impossible. During the twenty years that the ark had been at Kirjath-jearim, the Hebrews had had time to recover from the blow occasioned by its loss. Beginning again to breathe freely, they were not wholly unprepared to retrieve their disasters. With a calm yet anxious eye had Samuel, in his retreat, watched events under the enlightening and directing influence of the Spirit of God. At length he came forward, resolved either to achieve the independence of his country or perish. But a holy work required holy instruments. Israel was unclean. First, therefore, must the people be purged of the foulness of idolatry. They had manifested tokens of repentance. But Samuel knew how of old they had been as swift to relapse as to repent. Therefore, resolving on a solemn act of public lustration, he said: "If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, put away the strange gods, and Ashtaroth, from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hands of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the Lord only."†

A general assembly of the people was held at Mizpeh. A public fast was observed. Libations of water were offered in token of religious purification. Samuel put up prayers in the name and in the behalf of Israel. Finally, he was consecrated to the high and important office of judge.

During these solemn proceedings, the Hebrews were struck with fear, for news arrived that the armies of Philistia were approaching. They appealed to Samuel, and Samuel appealed to Jehovah. Entreated for his people, the Almighty inspired them with courage. The assailants were defeated, and a thunder-storm completed their discomfiture. Signal was the deliverance, and great was the mercy. A commemoration-stone was set up, bearing the inscription, Eben-ezer—"The Stone of Help." So complete was the overthrow, that through-

\* 1 Sam. vii. viii.

† 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4.

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out all the days of Samuel the Philistines occasioned no more trouble to Israel. The Scripture, indeed, is not unfavourable to the statement made by Josephus,\* to the effect that the Hebrews, encouraged by their success, took the offensive against their foes. Subdued by the now strong and enthusiastic Israelites, the Philistines were compelled to surrender the cities they had conquered, and to grant an honourable peace. The Canaanite tribes still remaining in the land were also quiet, either from weakness or from policy.

This, then, was the time for consolidating the powers of the commonwealth, and Samuel wisely and religiously resolved to develop the spiritual elements of Mosaism, and by means of a religious revival to restore unity at once in church and state. But before higher reforms could be ventured on, he felt it necessary to redress the administration of justice, which had fallen into great disorder, through the criminal neglect of Eli, and the wantonness and licence of his sons. Samuel, therefore, established his abode at Ramah, his native place, and, consecrating the spot by religious rites, made it the centre of a judicial circuit, comprising Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, round which he went year by year, administering justice.

Like all great administrators, Samuel looked to education as the chief and only sufficient means for realising the good he wished to confer on his nation. But education in Israel must be religious, for religious were all the aims, instruments, and tendencies of the Mosaic economy. The religion, however, which could accomplish the contemplated good, must come from, not the surface, but the centre of the system. Already had it been proved, by too many distressful instances, that Israel could not be saved by either ceremonialism or sacerdotalism. A new power must be evolved. Wisely did Samuel look to the prophetic element for the restorative and invigorating resources he required. For ages had the Hebrews possessed in their midst the power of prophecy; for Jehovah was with them, and never wholly left them, except when they had renounced his worship, and apostatised to cruel and lascivious abominations. This prophetic power was recognised in the old historians of the nation, as well as in its bards and law-givers. Samuel himself was under its influence, and in Moses it stood at full tide. The power did not consist merely nor primarily

\* Antiq. vi. 2, 3.

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in the gift of predilection, but in those intense spiritual intuitions, and that high and burning enthusiasm, which ensue from the contact of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man, and which confer on the inspired man of God, not only deep insight and far-reaching foresight, but power for action no less impulsive than irresistible. This prophetic power, in its highest relations, is a gift of God.\* Yet lower degrees are useful, and lower degrees, with God's aid, might arise under the fostering hand of education. Trained to a familiar acquaintance with the wonderful history of Israel, taught to see in that history the constant baring of the face and of the arm of the Almighty, quickened with a vivid sense of God's ceaseless presence and government in personal and social life, young men might be formed who would distinguish between the outer ceremony and the inner sentiment; and, led by the Spirit of God, would age after age bring out into relief, and impress on the people's hearts, the grand spiritual ideas which form the kernel of the Mosaic religion. Should his efforts be crowned with success, Samuel would thus bring into existence a class of high-minded and deeply religious men, who, acting as the sacred orators of the nation, and the spiritual exponents of the law, would not only qualify and supplement the action of the priests, and bridle the licentiousness of the crown, but conduct the people through God's own ways to God's own purposes, and so enable Israel to achieve the very high and enduring good pre-ordained in the councils of the All-wise.

Under views not unlike these, Samuel was led to institute "the school of the prophets." At least, it is to his times that these collegiate establishments or fraternities run back,† and not without reason is Samuel accounted their founder and their head. Far from the noise of arms, and the blasts of the clarion, the young prophets sang the praises of Jehovah to the softer strains of the lyre, the harp, and the flute, and, in peaceful seclusion, meditated on God and the true sense of

\* The word nabi, prophet, denotes one who is filled with the Spirit of God, the source with the Hebrews of all man's higher and nobler thoughts, affections, and efforts. The nabi, therefore, was pre-eminently "the man of God": as such, he communed with God, spake of God, taught God's truth, and promoted God's cause. In this wide and comprehensive sense, Abraham is called "a prophet." (Gen. xx. 7.)

† 1 Sam. x. 5, 10--12; 2 Kings ii. 3, 5; iv. 38.



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the law. They lived together in several cities, where they occupied particular districts. Those cities were in general those which Saul habitually visited, and where were held the public assemblies of the people. We find them at Ramah, the native place and residence of Samuel, where the central institution seems to have stood, immediately under the presidency of their originator himself. They are found also at Bethel, Gilgal, and Jericho.

The fruit produced in these establishments was so high and so ample, as to go far to realize the brightest anticipations of Samuel. It is true, that some of those who in the after history hold the highest rank in prophetic honours, did not come out of any of these religious houses. Yet the general influence of the schools must have been very beneficial in promoting the higher discipline of the nation, and in preparing the way for purer forms of religious thought, and nobler efforts of religious action. If this happy result ensued, then the schools must also have co-operated with the Divine Spirit, in producing that depth of spiritual sentiment, and that spontaneousness of religious utterance, which characterise the prophet of the highest rank, and make his words powers, like the flame, the lightning, and the thunder. Whatever share may be ascribed to the institutions of Samuel, certain it is that to the Hebrew nation and the Mosaic polity, the world is indebted for the most high-minded and influential class of men that ever appeared. In religious earnestness, self-surrender, indomitable zeal, and devotedness to their God and their country, the Hebrew prophets stand alone, and by their singular and transcendent excellence, prefigure and prepare the way for their sublime and unapproachable head, the Prophet of Nazareth—the Light and Saviour of the world.

It was natural that the Israelites should refer the peace and prosperity they now enjoyed to their earthly author. Every advantage and every blessing turned the eye and carried the heart to the great national benefactor. But Samuel was falling into years. What guarantee was there of the existing tranquillity? Who would administer justice when the present judge was no more? Might not the old anarchy return as soon as the reins had slipped from his hands? The Philistines, if subjugated, were still powerful. The young prophets were too young to bear the keys of government. One man

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had saved the country; one man must be looked to for its continued preservation. In this state of mind, Samuel might easily have caused himself to be proclaimed king. If the thought occurred to his mind, it had no weight with him. Royalty in any hands was, he knew, opposed to the spirit of the constitution. The only king in Israel was Jehovah. The realisation of his kingship in the souls of the people was the great purpose of Moses, as it is the constant aim of Christ.

The people, however, saw these things with different eyes. They demanded a visible and earthly king. Their demand was unhappily supported by the failure of an attempt made by Samuel to train his own sons to the high functions of government.\* Samuel remonstrated. He painted in vivid colours the heinous offence they were in danger of committing against God. He set clearly and fully before them the misdeeds to be expected from royalty. All in vain; still the demand was reiterated and pressed. Coerced by their importunities, the venerable prophet set such limits as he was able to the regal authority, and having conferred manifold blessings on his country, died with a character unsullied by ambition, untainted by selfishness, and unstained by immorality. So high, so pure, so benign, is the excellence produced by true religion.

## NAOMI AND RUTH.

The pleasing aspects of this painful theme may be illuminated and coloured by an incident of the richest domestic benevolence. The simple tale of Ruth has been reserved for the close, for here only does it seem to be in its place. It is a time of famine. The highlands of Judah are parched by the burning suns under whose fires man and beast pine away and die. The only hope is in exile. This sad resource Elimelech of Bethlehem is compelled to adopt. Taking by his languid and feverish hand, Naomi his wife, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, he makes his way painfully across the Jordan eastward, and seeks food lest he perish in the richly covered plains of Moab. When father and mother had recovered their strength in the midst of plenty and ease, the young men took to themselves wives of the daughters of the land. The name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth.

\* 1 Sam. viii. 1, seq.; Joseph. Antiq. vi. 3, 2.

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Ten years of pure domestic happiness soon, too soon, passed away. The sons died. Their mother longed for the scenes in the midst of which she had been born and spent her happiest days. Hearing "that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread," she resolved to return home. Accompanied by her daughters, she went forth on her way. A conflict arose—a conflict of tender and praiseworthy affections. Orpah and Ruth had left a mother behind, and they were following the steps of a mother-in-law. True, Naomi was gentle and loving, and as such she had drawn the young women after her. But when they came into a region never visited before, their hearts seem to have misgiven them, and they hesitated to proceed. Whereupon Naomi urged them to go back to their own kin. Orpah yielded, and returned; but Ruth would follow her good mother-in-law. In vain were all Naomi's efforts to shake her fixed determination. Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem. It was the season of spring. Barley-harvest had begun. The reapers were in the field. Thither went Ruth to glean after them as they bore their precious burden to the granaries. While gleaning, she was seen by Boaz, the owner of the land. Smitten with the charms of the gleaner, Boaz made inquiry who she was, and prosecuted his suit until he secured her for his wife. Of the marriage a son was born. "And Naomi took the child and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. And they called his name Obed; he is the father of Jesse, the father of David."<sup>\*</sup>

To that marriage the Scriptures trace back the natural lineage of Christ. And thus is there found here an illustration of the perpetually recurring biblical fact, showing how, under God's providence, darkness constantly issues in light, and mourning is converted into joy. A more beclouded and disturbed age than that of the Judges is not to be found in the sacred writings. Yet at the end of that period we have seen premonitions of the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his rays.

"The morning mist is clear'd away,  
Yet still the face of heaven is grey."

\* Ruth iv. 16, seq.

# THE COMMERCE OF THE ANCIENTS.

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**T**RAFFIC between the inhabitants of the same district, and of different countries, is one of those characteristic circumstances which distinguish man from the lower animals. Though of a very inferior kind, it is not only distinctive, for no other living creature recognises any production, natural or artificial, the property of another, and acquires the possession of it by the surrender of an equivalent. The correspondence of individuals and nations is a purpose, urged by their wants and wishes, while an exercise and function of intelligence, is the fulfilment of a beneficial, and divine plan. It was evidently contemplated by the Almighty, when he laid the foundations of the world, and made it the residence of a race of rational beings, that they should exchange commodities. Hence the difference between the products of distinct portions of the globe, consequent on diversity of soil and climate; the unequal distribution of mineral wealth; and the varying mental and physical capabilities of mankind. Some regions are so eminently adapted for agriculture as to wave with wheat harvests, and yield a hundred-fold increase, under the most judicious treatment of the surface. Others respond reluctantly to the labours of the husbandman, yet are spontaneously covered with short succulent grasses, adequate to sustain herds of cattle and flocks of sheep. Lands, rugged with mountains, afford little scope either for tillage or pasture.

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but often possess rich mines of the precious or the useful metals; while vast alluvial plains, which are annually green with verdure and gay with flowers, are altogether destitute of metalliferous deposits. The traveller may journey for days through various localities without meeting with timber sufficient to rear a hut; and then pass on to forests so extensive and dense as to be apparently boundless, and scarcely penetrable. The vine and the olive yield their fruit; spices and aromatics spread their perfume; cotton, silk, sugar, indigo, and other articles, are raised in particular districts, and cannot be produced over the greater part of the earth's surface. In fact, no single country can be named that would not, if confined to its own resources, be deficient in some products of prime importance to a civilised community.

This restricted distribution of many of nature's gifts has doubtless been made with a view to the free and extended mercantile intercommunion of mankind. By its establishment each country exchanges a superfluous portion of its own peculiar produce for that which is raised in others; and thus the general diffusion is secured of whatever is useful, rare, and valuable, however locally developed. At the same time, those industrial pursuits are stimulated to the utmost in particular nations, which are either favoured by physical circumstances or consonant to their taste and genius, in order that they may meet the wants of other communities, and have their own in return supplied. The families of men have thus been constituted dependent upon each other, with the intention of connecting them in the bonds of intercourse, however separated by towering highlands, dreary deserts, or deep and stormy waters. The arrangement is adapted, as it was designed, to promote amity, and to further the advance of knowledge and general improvement, for by universal acquaintance and interchange each division of the human race is, to some extent, enriched with the wealth and experience of the entire species.

Commerce was in action long prior to the era of written records, and must of necessity date from the infancy of society. Its operations meet us in the oldest historical documents, and are repeatedly noticed by the inspired penmen, both incidentally and by direct statement, in narrating the fortunes of the chosen people. The descendants of Abraham were not indeed addicted to foreign traffic, at least through a considerable

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portion of their national career, owing to the restraints of the divine constitution under which they lived. But the restrictive policy of their laws and institutions was often disregarded; and, being located on the shores of the Mediterranean, surrounded by the nations that attracted or conducted the commerce of the ancient world, they were brought, by geographical position and political events, into intimate connection with them and their pursuits. Hence the history of the Jews—one of the principal topics of the Old Testament—could not be detailed without those general notices of neighbouring states—Egypt, Arabia, Phœnicia, Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia—which illustrate the social economy and external relations of their respective populations. Hence, also, it is that we learn more from the historical and prophetic books of Scripture respecting the mercantile dealings of remote antiquity than from any other source.

In the earlier ages of the world, commerce was limited to comparatively narrow geographical bounds, restricted to few articles, and conducted in a cumbrous manner, being altogether carried on by a rude system of barter. But as mankind multiplied, and civilisation created new wants—as familiarity with the ocean tempted men to brave its dangers, and far-stretching monarchies were founded—mercantile enterprise enlarged its sphere and increased its commodities, till, long previous to the Christian era, it extended from the pillars of Hercules on the west, to the frontiers of China on the east—from the Britannic islands and the coast of the Baltic on the north, to the banks of the Niger and the extremity of continental India on the south. It should, however, be distinctly noticed, that except in rare instances, there was no direct correspondence between distant points. The wares of countries remote from one another were interchanged by repeated transfer from hand to hand, each intermediate link in the chain sharing in the advantages of the communication.

In a concise survey of the commerce of the ancients, to which we are limited, reference will be made to its principal commodities, its means and instruments, including the medium of exchange, overland transit, river and sea navigations, while some of the great centres of mercantile transactions will be incidentally noticed.

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### PRINCIPAL ARTICLES OF TRADE.

The more important commodities may be grouped under a few general heads; and a brief reference to them will sufficiently illustrate the geographical direction and extent of ancient trade. With few exceptions, they are enumerated by the prophet Ezekiel in his celebrated description of the commerce of Tyre,\* for that city was for centuries the greatest mercantile emporium of antiquity, and amassed such wealth that her merchants are spoken of as princes, and her traffickers as the honourable of the earth.

SPICERY AND AROMATICS.—Morning and evening, incense was burnt upon the altars of the Lord, from the time when Israel encamped in the wilderness to the final desolation of Jerusalem. Three times a day in Egypt, as the solar glory appeared in the east, reached the zenith, and declined to the western horizon, the priests greeted the sun-god with offerings of perfume. The disciples of Zoroaster in Persia honoured the luminary in a similar manner; and in all the temples of Greek and Roman idolatry,

“Treasur’d odours breathed a costly scent,”

as gifts peculiarly acceptable to the imaginary beings which the sculptured marbles coldly personified. The living also applied fragrant waters and unguents to their dress and persons; the dead were anointed with perfumed oils to retard corruption; and the bodies of the wealthy were elaborately embalmed by professional artists. These social and religious usages originated a vast and permanent demand for aromatic products; and as the most prized were native to regions distant from the seats of civilisation, their supply formed one of the most extensive and lucrative branches of commerce in ancient times. The earliest mercantile transaction on record brings before us Midianite merchants, to whom Joseph was sold by his brethren, conveying from Gilead to Egypt, spicery, balm, and myrrh—odoriferous resins yielded by the terebinth, and other related trees, common to parts of the Holy Land and Arabia. The fidelity of the sacred narrative in this relation is worthy of notice. Though plentifully supplied with foreign produce, the Egyptians depended entirely upon foreigners to bring it to their markets. History has no instance of a land

\* Chap. xxvii.

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commercial expedition, or a trading voyage, undertaken by that singular people until a comparatively recent date. The restrictive policy of their sovereigns, with their own peculiar domestic customs and religious ideas, combined to keep them to their native soil, which they seldom or never quitted, except in time of war. They had a political aversion to strangers. The sea was viewed with horror, as an emblem of the evil being, Typhon, the implacable enemy of their god Osiris. They had no wood in their own land fitted for the construction of ships, out of which sprung one of the causes of the long and bloody wars in after times between the Ptolemies and the Seleucidæ, who contended for the Phœnician forests. These circumstances operated to keep them to their own country, though the presence of foreigners among them was encouraged for commercial purposes, subject to certain restrictions, as that of establishing factories only in particular places. The Phœnicians traded with the hundred-gated Thebes; and upon the later capital, Memphis, becoming the chief mart, an entire quarter of the city was inhabited by their merchants. In exact harmony with these peculiarities, the inspired text mentions the transport of spicery to Egypt—foreign produce—by a company of foreigners.

Frankincense, so often mentioned, a gum burnt upon the incense altars, was imported from Southern Arabia, its native country, as well as India, where the parent-tree grows much more luxuriantly. Herodotus, a visitor to Babylon, affirms that a thousand talents of frankincense were annually consumed in the temple of Bel in that city. Some curious particulars are extant respecting this commerce. Thus, we are told that the trees being considered sacred, no one had occasion to watch his own property. Upon being harvested or collected, the frankincense was carried to a temple of the sun, the most holy among the nations of the Sabeans, or South Arabians, who were addicted from time immemorial to the idolatry of the heavenly bodies. Under the protection of this sanctuary, each proprietor placed his heap, attaching to it a ticket, on which was inscribed the quantity and price. Then came the merchant, and deposited near each lot the sum required. After him followed the priest, who took one-third of the price for the deity, and left the remainder for the seller. The frankincense from the young trees was the whitest, but the least odori-



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ferous. That of the older trees was yellow, but of stronger scent.

Of all the spices used by the ancients, cinnamon, the bark of a species of laurel, and cassia, the product of a kindred shrub, were the most esteemed. To offer to the gods crowns of cinnamon tipped with gold, was a refinement of imperial prodigality adopted in the wealthiest ages of Rome. Along with cassia, it was worthy of being used as an ingredient of the holy anointing oil of the tabernacle, with which Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priesthood in the wilderness. The mention of these spices at such an early date is of great interest and importance. Both being peculiar to Ceylon and the adjacent coasts of India, it follows that commercial intercourse had then been opened with those regions; and it can scarcely be doubted by whose agency it was carried on. The Hindoos themselves were not, and have never been, a seafaring people, though enterprising individuals among them might engage in short coasting voyages. Neither religion nor policy forbade it, as in the case of the Egyptians. The laws of Menû even contain certain regulations relative to the insurance of ships at sea. Still the great body of the nation have ever recoiled from hazardous adventure, being content to gaze passively upon the barrier of the great ocean, without a wish to cross it. On the contrary, the Arabians of the coast, a people altogether different in their habits from the Bedouin Arabs, were active commercialists, and bold mariners, in possession of ships and ports. To them the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean were chiefly indebted, in the first instance, for the spices and precious products of India, conveyed both by the way of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. From thence they passed overland to Tyre, and were shipped to the markets of the western world. "The merchants of Sheba and Raamah"—places in Southern Arabia—"they were thy merchants; they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices."\* "To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country?"† Through the same medium, pepper, another Indian product, reached the old Mediterranean states, for several varieties are noticed by Theophrastus. Along with the spice itself, the name seems to have migrated; for the Sanscrit name is *pippali*, whence the Greek *peperi*, the Latin

\* Ezek. xxvii. 22.

† Jer. vi. 20

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*pepper*, and our own pepper. Mace, the rind of the nutmeg, is also expressly mentioned by Plautus ; so that at least two centuries before the Christian era, some of the peculiar products of the Moluccas were known at Rome. But of the native country of these commodities, Greeks and Romans were profoundly ignorant ; and a popular error, prevalent through all antiquity, was grafted upon the fact of the carrying-trade of the Indian Seas being in the hands of the Arabians. It was imagined that the wares they brought were the produce of their own soil ; and hence a land composed largely of burning sands, with a pestilential climate, and only fertile tracts of limited extent, came to be distinguished by the still extant title of Arabia the Happy, Araby the Blest.

**METALS AND VALUABLE MINERALS.** — The astonishing abundance of the precious metals possessed by the great states of antiquity, and even by some rude pastoral nations, is evident from the page of history, both sacred and profane. This was especially the case with reference to gold. It was devoted not so much to a monetary purpose, as to decorative uses. The thrones of kings, the furniture of royal palaces, and vessels for the table, were fashioned of massive gold, while it ornamented the persons, weapons, and horses of satraps and private individuals, and was extensively employed in the embroidery of dresses and carpets. Whence came the gold ? There can be little doubt that its source was at first domestic, or nearly so ; and that while ordinary mining processes were conducted at an early period, the metal was most largely obtained from the auriferous sands of streams, which, like the far-famed Pactolus and Meander, the treasure-rivers of the Lydian monarchs, have now for ages been exhausted. Eliphaz, in the book of Job, speaks of laying up gold "as the stones of the brooks."\* But it is quite certain that gold was regularly procured from a somewhat distant site, indicated by the name of Ophir ; and equally so, that this was for centuries the principal source of supply. Job mentions the gold of Ophir ; it formed part of the treasure which David accumulated for the erection and adornment of the temple ; and Solomon expressly sent out a fleet for the purpose of obtaining it. "Upon thy right did stand the queen in gold of Ophir."† "I will make a man more precious than fine gold ; even a man than the golden wedge

\* Job xxii. 24.

† Psa. xlv. 9.

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of Ophir."<sup>\*</sup> The place, country, or region thus denominated must have been connected with the Indian Ocean, since Solomon's fleet sailed thither from Elath and Ezion-geber, ports at the northern extremity of the Red Sea. His dominions having been extended to that maritime district, the Jewish king, in conjunction with his Phœnician allies, wished to obtain by direct commercial intercourse the precious commodities they had been accustomed to receive second-hand from the Arabians.

The situation of Ophir has given rise to much learned research and ingenious speculation. But general opinion is in favour of Heeren's conclusion, that the name, like those of Thule and others, with the ancients, denotes no particular spot, but only a certain region or part of the world, such as the East or West Indies in modern geography. It may therefore be understood as a general name for the rich countries of the south, lying on the African, Arabian, and Indian coasts, as far as they were at that time known. The produce imported, besides gold, consisted of ivory, ebony, precious stones, apes, and peacocks. Solomon's successors lost the direct communication thus opened with the Indian Ocean, being driven from a southern sea-board during the civil wars that followed his death; and the monopoly of its commerce reverted to the Arabians.

No obscurity rests upon the source from which the principal supply of silver was derived. This was from Spain, mentioned under the name of Tarshish or Tartessus, different forms of the same word. The Phœnicians applied it to one of their colonies on the Atlantic coast of the Peninsula; and also comprehensively to the territory in which all their settlements in that quarter were situated, answering to the southern parts of the modern Andalusia. "Silver spread into plates is brought from Tarshish."<sup>†</sup> "Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs."<sup>‡</sup> Spain was the Peru of antiquity. Relations respecting the vast abundance of the precious metals found by the first Phœnician visitors, are remarkably similar to the glowing pictures drawn of the riches of the New World by its Spanish discoverers. The strangers not only freighted their ships with silver to the water's edge, but made their ordinary

<sup>\*</sup> Isa. xlii. 12.

<sup>†</sup> Jer. x. 9.

<sup>‡</sup> Ezek. xxvii. 12.

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utensils, anchors not excepted, of the metal; and the mother-country lost no time in founding colonies, in order to enjoy the spoils. The ore lay exposed to view; and so little were the natives aware of its value, that their commonest implements were composed of it. After the harvest of the surface had been gathered, mines were opened and shafts sunk. In subsequent times, the Carthaginian conquerors of the Peninsula extended these operations; and after them its Roman masters derived immense wealth from the mines. It is remarkable, that from the earliest period noticed in history to the present day, silver, as an article of commerce, has generally travelled from *west to east*. Thus, the Phœnicians imported it from Spain, and bartered it in Arabia and other eastern countries for gold, where it is said to have had a much greater relative value. In the modern world, the western continent has chiefly supplied the eastern with it; and during the five years prior to the present, the immense quantity of more than twenty millions worth of silver, imported from the west, has gone eastward by way of England alone.

With respect to other metallic products, it must suffice in this place to refer to tin, the most restricted in its geographical distribution of all the metals, though usually abundant at the spots where it occurs. It is first historically noticed as part of the spoil of the Midianites, in the time of Moses, which was to be purified by fire; and Homer mentions it as one of the materials employed in forming the shield of Achilles. It has been a principal export of India in all ages, as at present, from the mines of Banca, probably the richest in the world. That tin was originally imported from this quarter is sustained by the correspondence of the Greek name for it, *cassiteros*, and the Phœnician, *kasdira*, with the Sanscrit, *kastara*. But tin was unquestionably brought from the west at a later date; in the first instance from the north of Spain, and afterwards from the British Islands. The Phœnician colonists of Gades, near the modern Cadiz, extended their voyages to our shores, perhaps more in the character of roving adventurers than of regular traders. The Carthaginians, their countrymen, despatched an expedition expressly to follow the same course, which, after a four months' sail, reached the country where tin and lead were to be procured. This was distinguished by a promontory, a bay, and some islands

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contiguous to the coast of Albion, and within two days' sail of Ierne (Ireland), in all probability a reference to the Lizard, Mount's Bay, and the semi-island of St. Michael's Mount. Pytheas, a Greek of Marseilles, prior to the age of Alexander the Great, appeared next in the same seas; and, finally, Publius Crassus, a Roman, passed over to the insular tin region, a little before the invasion of Cæsar. It is not to be inferred that either the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, or Greeks, carried on a direct and regular maritime trade with Britain in tin. Such a supposition is at variance with all the information we possess respecting their navigations and commercial system. It is much more likely, as in the time of the Romans, that the metal was conveyed across the Channel, and thence by land transport to the markets of the Levant, thus obviating the risk and difficulty of a long voyage, for which the means of the ancients were not ordinarily adequate.

Amber, a very costly article in early times, equal to gold in price, was procured from the southern shores of the Baltic, its grand repository, and was one of the few objects of ancient traffic with the northern nations. The mineral was known in the Homeric age, and wrought into various personal ornaments. A kidnapped prince speaks in the *Odyssey* as follows:—

“ An artist, such he seemed, for sale produced,  
Beads of bright amber, rivetted in gold.”

Pytheas, before referred to, roved from the British seas into the Baltic, and undoubtedly reached its amber coast, the shores of modern Prussia. He speaks of the sea throwing it up in considerable quantities, as at present; of the natives selling it to their neighbours, the Teutones; and, through their hands, it no doubt passed to the south. This we know to have been the case in a subsequent age; for Pliny represents it coming overland into the north of Italy, where the women wore it in necklaces as an amulet. The existence of a trade across Europe at a far more remote era is intimated by the old tradition of a sacred road over the Alps. Electrical properties were first noticed by the Greeks in amber, which it develops in a high degree on being rubbed. It is from their name for the mineral, *electron*, that we have our word *electricity*.

**PRECIOUS STONES.**—A passion for showy appearances has ever marked the oriental nations, and it specially distinguished

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the Romans, also, in their luxurious age. Hence, few wares of the merchant found a readier sale than precious stones, or were disposed of to greater profit. They were employed not only for personal decoration, and the embellishment of arms and furniture, but were extensively engraved as signets. Twelve precious stones, bearing the names of the tribes of Israel, are enumerated as set in the breastplate of the Jewish high priest, and nine of the number are mentioned by the prophet in a remarkable picture of the opulence and splendour of the King of Tyre. There is doubt respecting the true application of some of the denominative terms; but the diamond, and other prized mineralogical forms of the present age, of which India and Central Asia have ever been the most prolific sites, are certainly included. The sapphire, or azure-stone, so often mentioned, is admitted to be our *lapis lazuli*, from which we have ultramarine, found in the mountains of Bokhara, and the south of Asiatic Russia, and nowhere else in the same abundance and perfection. Pearls—at all times esteemed for their modest splendour and simple beauty—were fished up in distant ages from the Persian Gulf, and the strait between continental India and Ceylon, whence these costly natural productions are at present principally derived.

**MANUFACTURES.**—Woven fabrics, as well as the raw material for clothing, formed a very considerable branch of ancient commerce. Cotton, raised in Egypt, was habitually worn by the inhabitants; and the cerements in which they wrapped the dead were of the same material, as modern examination of mummies has proved. Weaving both cotton and flax was one of their principal occupations, in which they displayed great taste and skill, embroidering linens with cotton thread, and cottons with flaxen fibre. These products were exported from the banks of the Nile, for “fine linen (or cotton) with brodered work from Egypt,” is mentioned among the imports of Tyre.\* The Phœnicians themselves excelled in the art of weaving, but seem to have produced chiefly woollen goods. The tribes wandering over the Syrian and Arabian deserts, in possession of extensive flocks, supplied them with fleeces of excellent quality and fineness, the “white wool,” literally the wool of the wilderness, spoken of by the prophet.† They were renowned also for the beauty and splendour of their dyes, by which they

\* Ezek. xxvii.

† Ezek. xxvii. 18.

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so vastly enhanced the value of their fabrics, that the foreign demand for them was large and constant. Ezekiel distinguishes "blue clothes, brodered work, chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar," among their merchandise.\* The words bring before the mind's eye a picture of bales, warehouses, quays, shipments, and bills of lading, with the hurly-burly of porters, merchants, sailors and captains, answering to scenes at our own commercial ports.

The dye, so famous in antiquity as the Tyrian purple, though brought to perfection there, was originally discovered and prepared at Sidon, the mother city, which also had precedence in the manufacture of woollens. The woman encountered upon the beach of an island by the wanderers in the "Odyssey"—

"A fair Phœnician, tall, full-sized, and skill'd  
In works of elegance"—

replied to the interrogations of the sailors—

"I am of Sidon, famous for her wealth,  
By dyeing earned."

It was not a single colour that was produced, but various purples, a dark blue tint predominating in some, a violet or a scarlet in others, owing to the skilful manipulation of the dyeing material. This was obtained from the juice of two species of shell-fish, abundant on the coast, one of which was found adhering to the cliffs, and the other was taken by fishing in the sea. Purple garments, from their imposing appearance, were in the greatest request in the higher ranks of ancient society, and became a badge of distinction or wealth, on account of their costliness. Thus the Queen of Troy—

"Herself, the while, her chamber, ever sweet  
With burning odours, sought. There stored she kept  
Her mantles of all hues, accomplished works  
Of fair Sidonians, wafted o'er the deep;  
From these the widest and of brightest dyes  
She chose for Pallas; radiant as a star  
It glittered."

The dyeing was always performed in the wool, and after supplying the demand made by the home manufacturers, the surplus was sent to foreign parts. In the age of Augustus, a pound of wool dyed with the Tyrian purple was worth nearly £30 at Rome.

\* Ezek. xxvii. 24.

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Glass, another product of Phœnician skill, of which they were the inventors, with drinking vessels of the precious metals, ornaments, toys, and trinkets, all of their own manufacture, were articles with which they traded with the Greeks and other nations.

“ A silver goblet of six measures ; earth  
Own'd not its like for elegance of form.  
Skilful Sidonian artists had around  
Embellish'd it; and o'er the sable deep  
Phœnician merchants into Lemnos port  
Had borne it, and the boon to Thaos given.”

“ It chanc'd that from Phœnicia, fam'd for skill  
In arts marine, a vessel thither came,  
Laden deep with toys.”

It is very probable that the decorations of the Jewish women, enumerated by the prophet Isaiah\*—the bravery of their tinkling ornaments, ear-rings, chains, bracelets, and girdles, with other articles of luxury, as holiday clothes, artificial hair, mirrors, smelling bottles, and amulets—were of Phœnician workmanship, exchanged for the corn, wine, and oil of Judea.

At an equally early date, the populations on the Euphrates addicted themselves to manufactures, and especially plied the weavers' shuttle, to supply foreign as well as domestic wants. The goodly Babylonish garment purloined in the time of Joshua, might not have been a product of the city, but of the district, as the phrase in the original denotes, “a mantle of Shinar.” But upon becoming a dominant capital, and long after being incorporated in the Persian empire, the looms of Babylon were celebrated for their fabrics, consisting of richly coloured figured carpets, coverings for beds and sofas, and all kinds of apparel, cotton, linen, and woollen. The Babylonian shawls, of glossy texture, embroidered with gold and figured, excited universal admiration at Rome, and realised enormous prices. The anecdote is related of Cato, the stern foe of luxury, that upon one of them being bequeathed to him—an evidence of its value—he immediately gave it away.

It is not known when the western Asiatics were first made acquainted with silk, and thus brought into commercial intercourse with China, by the reception of its peculiar produce. In our version of the Old Testament, silk is named; but it is very improbable that this is the true rendering of the original.

\* Isa. iii. 18, etc.



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No writer contemporary with the Persian monarchy mentions the material; but caravan journeys to the great desert on the Chinese frontier are referred to. The first ancient author who speaks of silk is Aristotle, who intimates that the produce of the cocoons was wound upon bobbins by women for the purpose of being woven, and names the individual said to have first woven silk at Cos. It may, therefore, be concluded that in his time, the fourth century before the Christian era, raw silk was brought from the interior of Asia, and manufactured in the Greek Archipelago. But at a considerably earlier date, a commerce in the article was probably established between eastern and western Asia. Silk fabrics, remarkably thin, worn by the voluptuous ladies of Rome in the Augustan age, had the name of Coan vests from the place of their manufacture.

MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES.—From the days of the patriarchs, when the sons of Jacob went down into Egypt to buy food, that country has been the granary of the neighbouring nations; and most appropriately is its corn spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, as the "harvest of the river," the productiveness of the soil depending entirely upon the annual overflow of the great stream. The corn trade was exclusively conducted for generations by land. Superstitiously loathing the sea, as well as apprehending piracy, it was a fundamental maxim of the ancient Egyptians to allow no vessels, either of their own or of foreigners, to navigate the mouths of the Nile. Nor was it until the close of their national independence that this prejudice yielded to expediency or enlightened views; and then only the Canopean arm of the river was opened to maritime commerce, while vessels were required to discharge and ship their cargoes at Naucratis, a city upon its banks, near the site where Alexandria was afterwards built. At length, under the rule of the Persians, all its mouths were thrown open, and were regularly visited by Phœnician, Greek, and Roman merchantmen, bringing their respective goods, and returning laden chiefly with the produce of the soil. The Athenians, with a very considerable population and a scanty territory, were obliged annually to import grain for their subsistence, to the amount of one-third of the required supply. So anxious were they to secure the quantity, that no one

ght lend money on a ship that did not sail on the express

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condition of bringing back a portion, as part of the return cargo. Sunium was fortified in order to protect the corn vessels; and war galleys were employed to convoy them. Besides Egypt, the kingdom of the Bosphorus, or the modern Crimea, contributed to fill the granaries of Athens. Hence the people so vigorously exerted themselves to relieve the Byzantines when attacked by the Macedonian Philip, because by taking that city he wished to command the entrance to the Black Sea, and cut off their corn trade. Demosthenes, therefore, the instigator of the movement, justly congratulated himself upon its success. Rome, republican and imperial, depended mainly upon the African provinces for the supply of its grain market. The ship in which Paul was wrecked was bound from Alexandria to Italy with a cargo of wheat.

The vine, a native of Asia, was not naturalised in Europe or Africa, in the proud days of Tyre; and hence the fermented juice of the grape was one of the principal articles exported by the Phœnicians, most largely to Greece and Egypt. It was the wine of Helbon,\* probably the modern Aleppo, so esteemed as to be served at the table of the Persian kings, that they sent out, transporting it in large earthen vessels. Upon being emptied of their contents, the vessels were applied to an extraordinary purpose by the Persian rulers of Egypt. They were placed in the desert between that country and Palestine, as so many cisterns to collect water, and facilitate the passage of the caravans.

Ivory and ebony, both the natural products of India and Ethiopia, are conspicuous in ancient traffic, being demanded for the ornament of royal palaces, and the mansions of the wealthy. The two substances, the one animal and the other vegetable, are generally named together, being used in association. Thus Lucan describes the banqueting-hall of Cleopatra, queen of Egypt—

“Of solid ebony each post was wrought,  
From swarthy Meroë profusely brought;  
With ivory was the entrance crusted o’er,  
And polished tortoise hid each shining door.”

The reason of the association is intimated by Virgil—

“The surrounding ebony’s darker hue  
Improves the polished ivory to the view.”

\* Essek. xxvii. 18.

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"The men of Dedan"—a reference to the Bahrein islands in the Persian gulf, depots of Indian produce—"were thy merchants; they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony."\*

A trade in horses was established by Solomon, though in disobedience to the divine law, which forbade their multiplication, lest the people should be tempted to transfer their dependence from God for success in battle to a body of cavalry. He provided himself with them to the number of twelve thousand from Egypt. That country possessed a valuable breed, exclusively devoted to war or luxury, for the Egyptian horse is never pictorially represented as engaged in agricultural labour. So much was the animal in demand, that the king's merchants undertook to supply the neighbouring nations; and were able to monopolise it, as their master had entire command of the communication by land between Africa and Asia. They "brought out horses for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria."† The stated price of a horse in the Egyptian market, a hundred and fifty shekels of silver, amounts to somewhat less than twenty pounds.

The trade in slaves, "living working-tools," as they are defined by Aristotle, seems to have been as ancient as any other branch of commerce. It meets us in the history of Joseph as a traffic which had grown familiar by long establishment, for his brethren offered him for sale to strangers without scruple, and the merchants bought him with as little hesitation. The Phœnicians, in their early intercourse with the Greeks, seldom visited their coasts for legitimate dealing, without sailing away with kidnapped boys and girls, to be sold in their own market, or to be redeemed by heavy ransoms from their friends. The Greeks likewise, as they grew powerful, retaliated with the same piracies; and hence arose that violent animosity between the two nations which distinguished their whole history. But the Phœnicians regularly supplied themselves with unfortunates for sale, from a quarter which has furnished them to the present period, though the victims have often been so self-deluded as to be voluntary candidates for a life of splendid infamy. "Tubal and Meshech, they were thy merchants; they traded the persons of men, and vessels of brass in thy market."‡ Tribes in ancient

\* Ezek. xxvii. 15.

† 2 Chron. i. 17.

‡ Ezek. xxvii. 13.

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times located within the shadow of the Caucasus, are identified by all authorities as the posterity of the sons of Japhet, mentioned by the prophet. Their finest specimens, of both sexes, always preferred as slaves, were disposed of in the markets of Tyre, for a life of labour or licentiousness, even as in the modern age the most beautiful of the Georgians and the Circassians, from the same region, have been devoted for gain to the harems of Constantinople and Ispahan. This detestable branch of trade, with the cruel forcible abduction of children from parents which attended it, is referred to as one of the great transgressions of Tyre and Sidon, to be visited in the righteous retributions of Providence. They are charged with having "given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink. The children also of Judah, and the children of Jerusalem, have ye sold unto the Grecians."\* The sharp sword of Alexander was employed to inflict the punishment.

### MEANS AND INSTRUMENTS OF ANCIENT COMMERCE.

**MEDIUM OF EXCHANGE.**—It is related of the Carthaginians, that they traded with an African people with whom they had no personal communication. Having arrived at a certain place, they arranged their goods in a number of small heaps, and retired to a distance. The natives then came forward, examined the lots, and placed opposite to them the wares which they were willing to give in exchange. If the merchant was satisfied with the bargain, he took away the offered commodities, and left his own; but if otherwise, he carried away the latter, and traffic was for that season at an end. This anecdote of Herodotus is by no means improbable, for a similar mode of dealing, dumb and distant, existed for ages on the borders of China, and has often marked the intercourse of civilised with savage tribes, each being suspicious of the intentions of the other. But apart from this peculiarity, the relation refers to the universal method of traffic in primitive times, purchases and sales being effected by the simple transfer of goods.

Experience of embarrassment in effecting an exchange speedily suggested the selection of certain articles of general and definite worth as a medium, in order to obviate the diffi-

\* Joel iii. 3, 6.

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culty arising from a buyer having no commodity wanted by the seller, as well as to facilitate determinations of value. Cattle and sheep were largely employed for this purpose. Hence the Hebrew word *kesitah*, "a lamb," also denotes a "piece of money," for while the animal was often used as an instrument of exchange, probably the money so denominated answered to its average price. Our own word "pecuniary," is derived from the Latin *pecus*, "cattle;" and was originally applied by the Romans to a copper currency stamped with the image of an ox—live-stock having performed the functions of money. The armour of one of the Homeric heroes is said to have cost a hundred oxen. Among rude tribes in all ages, salt, skins, shells, fruit, and other articles, have formed the ordinary circulating medium. European trade at present, with uncivilised races, is necessarily an exchange of merchandise against merchandise; and while signs often take the place of speech for want of a common language, the same cautious reserve, of which an ancient instance has been quoted, is shown on both sides, owing to the absence of mutual confidence.

Upon becoming familiarly acquainted with metals, men were not slow to perceive their adaptation as instruments of commerce, arising from their durableness, narrow compass, capability of division into any number of parts, and re-union by fusion when required. Though employed for the purpose at an early epoch, gold and silver were still regarded for ages solely in the light of goods; and passed from the buyer to the seller as bullion, not as coin, being weighed instead of counted out. Silver seems to have long antedated gold in its application to this important service; and it was the more precious metal of the two throughout the east in old historic times. The earliest record of the use of gold as money, refers to the time of David, who purchased the threshing-floor of Ornan, for "six hundred shekels of gold by weight." But in the patriarchal age, we read that Abraham "weighed" to the children of Heth, as the price of a burying-place, "four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant"—a reference doubtless to its pure quality. The trouble of weighing the metal every time a purchase was made, might readily be obviated by dividing it into determinate portions of a certain quantity and value; and the adoption of this natural

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process will explain the mention of numerical amounts, without weight being stated, as when Abraham received from Abimelech "a thousand pieces of silver." But after this step had been taken in countries advancing towards improvement, the silver or gold had still to have its quality tested by assaying. This involved a much greater inconvenience, though it was a perfectly necessary operation, in order to prevent the fraudulent substitution of adulterated compositions. As a remedy, the authorities of nations issued particular quantities of the metals in circulation among them, with a public stamp affixed, thereby attesting the quality and amount; or, in other words, mints and coinages were instituted.

The most ancient money, properly so called, that has come down to our times, is the *daric* of Persia, a gold coin extensively circulated in Western Asia and in Greece, specimens of which are in the British Museum. The name is commonly derived from that of Darius Hystaspes, or the earlier Darius the Median, though some refer it to an old Persic word, signifying king, and claim for the coin a still higher antiquity. The image of a king as a crowned archer is stamped upon one of the faces. It is generally agreed that the *adarkon* and *darkemon* mentioned in the later historical books of the Old Testament, different forms of the same word, rendered "drums" in our version, is the Persian daric, with which the Jews became familiar during the Babylonish captivity. Silver was originally the general coinage of Greece. Sparta and Byzantium are said to have made use of iron; but no ancient coins of that metal have ever been found. The first coinage of the Romans, usually attributed to Servius Tullius, was of bronze, in which copper largely predominated. A silver currency was issued B.C. 269, a few years before the struggle with Carthage commenced; and sixty-two years later a gold coinage appeared.

OVERLAND TRANSIT.—The unsettled condition of society in the east, especially in early times, with the stern realities of nature in vast tracts of country dividing different communities—lawless hordes of rovers, whose hand is against every man, unless overawed by numbers, or expensive contributions purchase an exemption from indiscriminate pillage—dry and thirsty lands where no water is, but still the same burning sun, with a soil either of sterile rock or of shifting sand, disdaining to hold

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a foot-print as a testimony of subjection—these circumstances render travelling to any distance in such regions impracticable, unless parties associate for mutual protection, and the provision of adequate resources for the journey. The remark particularly applies to commercial expeditions involving the transport of merchandise; and even with the best arrangements, the passage of a desert is not unattended with difficulty and danger. But in every age the desire of gain has been an all-conquering passion, instead of yielding to considerations of hardships and peril; and from the remotest historic periods, merchants, forming themselves into numerous bodies, and hiring well-armed attendants, have braved the terrors of the wilderness. Such companies, termed caravans, from the Persian word *cârvân*, are now, as they have been for thousands of years, the great means by which the internal commerce of Asia and Africa is conducted. A parallel case is that of merchant vessels consorting to form a fleet in time of war, and proceeding under convoy to their destination.

It is a striking instance of adaptation to particular circumstances, that an invaluable beast of burden has been bountifully bestowed upon these arid regions, without which no commercial intercourse through them could be maintained, and even simple intercommunication, under existing circumstances, would be to a great extent impossible. The camel more than any other creature exhibits a marked accommodation to his position. Nature has been economical of material in his whole organisation, being designed to range over districts affording the scantiest supply of nourishment. "She has not given him the fulness of form of the ox, the horse, or the elephant; but, limiting him to the purely indispensable, she has bestowed upon him a small head, almost without external ears, supported by a fleshless neck. She has stripped his thighs and legs of every muscle not essential to their movements, and has furnished his dry and meagre body with only the vessels and tendons required to knit the framework together. She has supplied him with a powerful jaw to crush the hardest aliments; but that he might not consume too much, she has narrowed his stomach, and made him a ruminant. She has cushioned his foot with a mass of muscle, which, sliding in mud, and ill adapted for climbing, unfits him for every soil but a dry, even, and sandy surface. She has condemned him to servitude by

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refusing him all means of defence against his enemies." The camel has accordingly been the ship of the desert from time immemorial, employed both in passenger and goods transit, and is indispensable for caravans which have to cross the great oriental wastes. Hence the prophet Isaiah remarks when symbolising spiritual prosperity by the activities of commerce: "The multitude of camels shall cover thee; the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense."<sup>\*</sup>

A modern caravan is in its principal features a picture of an ancient one, for eastern manners and customs have been remarkably permanent. The travellers follow each other in single or double file; and form a line of procession of considerable length on the great commercial routes, where numbers of mere wayfarers or pilgrims journey with merchants for safety and convenience. Bales of goods are strapped on the backs of the camels, and fastened around the body with cordage or leather thongs; and heavy wares are conveyed in large panniers. Six or seven hundredweight is the average burden of each animal, and about eighteen miles the mean daily rate. Horses accompany the caravans, but the camel has to carry skins of water for their use; and for several days together, there is frequently no other source of supply. Water is a daily want with the horse; but the camel will go three or four days without it, drinking only at the wells or reservoirs, and is capable of enduring even a ten days' thirst. For about two hours at noon, and from a little before sunset to the grey dawn, are the periods of repose. The halts are made, whenever practicable, at watering places, where there is some verdure, shade, and the song of birds. If the cisterns are empty, or the springs dried up, the consequences are painful in the extreme, and sometimes fatal to man and beast. "They come hither and are confounded," as Job remarks of the companies of Tema, the caravans of Sheba, under a similar disappointment. In many places, the bones of dead camels form a line of landmarks, indicating the right direction through the wastes of sand.

The leadership of a caravan was deemed an honourable office by the ancients, and its safe conduct a very creditable achievement. Before starting, the merchants usually elected

<sup>\*</sup> Isa. lx. 6.



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one of their number as a chief—a man of experience in travelling, well acquainted with the route, and qualified by firmness and conciliation to deal with the wild bands by the way. By a prosperous journey, he established a claim to gratitude; and after several, a kind of honorary title was in some instances conferred, similar to that of Imperator, with which the Roman legions saluted their successful generals. Inscriptions at Palmyra supply information to this effect. Thus, one commemorates Aurelius Zebida, who discharged his office of conductor with great credit while leading a company of merchants from that city to Vologesia, a town on the Euphrates, in order to attend the markets held there. Another is in honour of a certain Schalmalath, expressly said to have been a Jew, whose services had procured for him a statue, as well as an inscription, erected by the senate and people of the city. He had brought in safety a caravan to Palmyra at his own private expense, and had several times repeated this act of liberality. The expense refers to the sum which it was necessary to give to the wandering Arabs for a free passage through the desert. These honours will not appear surprising when we consider that the welfare of the state absolutely depended upon the safe arrival of the caravans. It appears that among the citizens of Palmyra, as well as other people of the East, an intimate connexion subsisted between commerce and religion, for the inscriptions were found in the court of the temple of the sun, the tutelar divinity of the city. This court is a spacious square area, capable of holding an entire encampment of Arabs, and paved throughout with marble. The temple stood in the centre, and outside are colonnades with numerous apartments. At the entrance are two large tanks, eight feet deep, furnished with steps to go down to the water. Its modern name is the "Court of Camels." The name and the arrangements sanction the surmise, that as the commercial interests of the city were supposed to be under the special protection of the gods, the caravans wended their way to the temple, and started from it. Hence, it had appurtenances for their accommodation answering the purpose of a caravanserai—the apartments being for the merchants—the court and tanks for the beasts of burden, and the goods they conveyed.

The rise of Palmyra, a splendid city in the heart of the wilderness, surrounded on all sides by an inhospitable desert,

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seems an anomaly, but is susceptible of an easy and natural explanation. It was founded by Solomon under the name of Tadmor, by which its ruins are at present known to the neighbouring tribes. Both names signify the city of palm trees. The site is an oasis, furnished with an abundant supply of wholesome water. Lying in the direct route of the caravans between eastern and western Asia, its copious fountains and shady palms rendered it peculiarly eligible for a long halt during a wearisome pilgrimage. But such a resting-place would speedily become a mart, by merchants from the east and west meeting at the spot, exchanging commodities, and thus shortening their respective journeys. In order to profit by this commerce, Solomon, who had a strong appetite for wealth, and sagacity to apprehend the means of acquiring it, founded Tadmor, furnished with accommodation for traffic and traders; and might obtain his own remuneration, either by the levy of customs' duties, or by employing factors to buy up and re-sell the wares. In a similar manner, for the mutual accommodation of merchants of different countries, shortening their journeys, marts were established at convenient points on the great commercial routes. They gradually grew up into cities, and went to decay upon commerce shifting its direction. Petra in the Edomite defile, Baalbec in Hollow Syria, Gerasa and Gadara on the margin of the desert beyond Jordan, are doubtless of the number. It was not necessary for the traders of Tyre to travel with their own merchandise into southern Arabia for spices, or into Egypt for cottons, but only as far as Petra, the common emporium.

But regular commercial journeys were made extending nearly three thousand miles, and requiring the space of three years for their accomplishment, going and returning. Thus, caravans started from north-western India, and from western Asia, bound to the frontiers of China, for raw and spun silk and silk stuffs. The earliest notice of the former occurs in a writer of the fourth century before the Christian era; and Greeks from Cilicia are named as forming part of the latter. The two companies of merchant adventurers met in the high mountain region eastward of Bokhara, near the significantly called Roof of the World, the loftiest plateau of the old continent, and thence descended together into the great Mongolian desert. The rendezvous, obviously an important station,

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was called the Stone Tower, from a monument of that kind at the spot. From this place to the capital of the Seres, all was a journey of seven months—a length of time which indicates, with sufficient distinctness, that the route must have reached at least to the frontier provinces of China. Accommodation for rest, and other arrangements after a long journey, and before commencing another, was naturally provided at the site, particularly as it skirted the vast plain of the desert of Cobi. There is some historical evidence, which need not be cited, that it was a caravanserai under the protection of a sanctuary, a temple of the sun. This idea is supported by present appearances, for the place still exists, and is used as a grand caravan station. The first information respecting it was obtained from a Russian, who, being taken prisoner on the frontiers of Siberia, was sold as a slave to the Usbeck Tatars. In the year 1780, he accompanied his master, a merchant, to the spot; and upon recovering his liberty, went to India, and related his adventures to Sir Eyre Coote. The Stone Tower, in a narrow pass of the Belur-tag, is one of nature's erections, which man has modified for his own convenience. It is a massy rock, the face of a mountain forming one side of the defile, hewn into a regular form, with two rows, each of twenty columns, now in a ruinous condition. Hence its modern name of Chihel-Sutun, or the forty columns. It is a most wonderful work, venerated by the natives far and wide, who ascribe it to supernatural agents. But by the merchants who rendezvous at the station, it bears the name of Tahkti-Suleiman, or the Throne of Solomon.

The institution of caravanserais, or buildings for the reception of caravans, in situations remote from towns, may be traced to a very early age. Xenophon refers their foundation to Cyrus, who, he states, caused them to be erected at the distance of a day's journey from each other, and supplied persons to keep them in charge. They are now very distinctive of Persia, and of provinces once included in the empire. However differing in detail, they are all constructed essentially on the same model; and consist of large quadrangular buildings, divided into a series of naked chambers, enclosing on every side an open court. Passengers, whether traders, pilgrims, or travellers, may occupy any of the chambers that may be vacant, but all further accommodation, as well as food,

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must be provided by themselves. Goods are stowed for the time in the courts, which are furnished with reservoirs for the beasts of burden. Such establishments have been promoted by the Mahommedan precept in favour of their erection, kings and wealthy individuals having founded them both as works of merit, and with a view to the perpetuation of their name. The Persians also took the lead in the formation of highways, which extended from the capital cities to the remotest parts of the empire, and were constructed at an immense cost of capital and labour. Though lines of military communication, intended to secure conquered provinces, they were open to general use, and greatly facilitated internal commerce.

One of these roads, the principal, described by Herodotus, stretched from Susa through the north of Mesopotamia into Asia Minor, and terminated at Ephesus, on the west coast. It had one hundred and eleven stations, with the same number of "lodging places," or caravanserais; and as the route passed through an inhabited and safe region all the way, it was traversed by merchants singly, as well as in company. The same road, with little deviations, is now used by the caravans between Ispahan and Smyrna. But the whole economy of overland transit in these countries is now on the eve of a change, after having subsisted, with but slight alterations, from the patriarchal age to the present. Egypt has its railway in action; and a line is surveying, intended to connect the Mediterranean with the Euphrates, and to be eventually prolonged to the Persian gulf. The time will certainly come, and is perhaps not far distant, when the camel's occupation will be gone—when the winds will daily bear across the desert the whistle of the steam-engine—and "tickets," "tickets," may perchance be heard within sight of the ruins of Babylon.

NAVIGATIONS.—The Nile and the Euphrates, so intimately associated with the great monarchies of antiquity, were applied to the purposes of commerce at an early era. But flowing principally through level tracts of pasture or wastes, unsupplied with wood adapted for the construction of vessels, this circumstance was unpropitious to their navigation, by a people dependent upon local resources. "Vessels of bulrushes," or boats of papyrus, were used upon the Nile for the conveyance of light produce and passengers, for short distances; and are supposed to be the "swift ships" to which Job compares the

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rapid passage of human life. Though swift with the current, the navigation against it, at least above Elephantina, was accomplished by the boats being hauled along with ropes from the banks. On the lower course of the river, comparatively large sailing vessels were employed. It is probable that the produce of Ethiopia and interior Africa was brought down into Lower Egypt on rafts or rude craft, which never returned, being broken up at the termination of the voyage. This we know to have been the case with reference to the navigation of the Euphrates. Descending from the highlands of Armenia to the level plains of Babylonia, the people of the former country sent their wares by the stream, principally wine, to the latter, which they could not produce themselves. The barks were floats, with only a skeleton of wood. This was covered with skins, overlaid with reeds; and an oval form was given to the whole, so that there was no difference between stern and prow. The wine was placed in casks upon them, with other goods; and they were carried along with the current under the guidance of two oars. On arriving at Babylon, the conductors sold the cargo and the skeletons, carrying back the skins by land, since the force of the stream rendered it impossible for them to return up the river. Thus at present, the market boats which go down the Danube to Vienna, and the corn rafts which drift with the Vistula to Dantzic, never return, but are sold with the cargoes they convey.

But the Babylonians, at the height of their power, had a direct maritime, as well as river and land trade. However impossible for barks like those described to proceed against the stream of the Euphrates, it was ascended from the Persian gulf by vessels of a different kind; and the rich produce of India was not only brought to the luxurious capital, but conveyed up the river to Thapsacus, and from thence by caravans to various parts of Asia. Æschylus refers to its inhabitants as a promiscuous multitude, "who both embark in ships, and boast of their skill in archery;" and inspired prophecy commemorates their maritime character: "Thus saith the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, whose cry is in the ships."\* The ships were

\* Isa. xliii. 14.

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probably built at the island of Tylos, a dependency in the Persian gulf. It is expressly said to have possessed a species of timber for ship-building, possibly the teak-wood of India, an important historical notice, since Babylonia was totally deficient in timber, with the exception of the date and cypress tree, neither of which furnish a suitable material.

History has not recorded the people who first launched upon the ocean, and passed its waves to another strand. But history sufficiently intimates that the love of gain, as well as of adventure, was the impelling motive to the enterprise; and that the earliest sea navigations were piratical descents upon stranger shores, as the mode of obtaining profit most obvious to unenlightened races. In this way the maritime states of modern times have generally commenced their career. But such a method of dealing speedily becomes difficult of execution, as experience of surprise and plunder, in a single instance, is sufficient to put a population upon its guard against a second. Necessity, therefore, with an apprehension of the superior advantages of peaceable traffic to perilous rapine, grafted commerce upon piracy; and good gradually grew out of the original evil.

The Phœnicians were the greatest maritime people of antiquity, and the first of whom we have any knowledge to traverse habitually the broad highway of the deep. They were naturally directed to a sea-faring life by local position, possessing an advantageous coast-line, with ample supplies of material for ship-building in the forests of Lebanon, while an outlet was required for the products of Asia, continually accumulating in their cities. They explored the shores of the Mediterranean, and crept along the Atlantic coast of Europe; planted settlements at Crete, Cyprus, Sicily, Malta, Sardinia, northern Africa, and southern Spain; conveyed the commodities of the East, with their own manufactures, to these colonies; returned with their peculiar products; and not only commanded for ages the carrying trade of the western seas, but aspired to wrest that of the Indian ocean out of the hands of the Arabians.

This attempt was made by Hiram, king of Tyre, in alliance with Solomon, for neither party was competent to undertake it independently. Solomon had command of ports "at the sea-side in the land of Edom," but had no ships, shipwrights,

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timber, or seamen; Hiram could furnish them in abundance, but had no access to a southern sea-board without the permission of his neighbour. Both, therefore, confederated to fit out a Hebrew-Phœnician fleet, which made the celebrated voyages to Ophir, already referred to, starting from the northern extremity of the Red Sea. The vessels are styled "ships of Tarshish." This may mean ships of a certain size and build, like those which traded thither. They returned once "every three years." It is not necessarily implied that they were absent for this period, for as the Hebrews reckoned broken years as whole ones, the actual time of the outward and homeward voyage would not be more than eighteen months, supposing the fleet to have sailed in the autumn of one year, stayed out the next, returning in the spring of the third. This length of time will not appear surprising, whatever shore of the Indian ocean was visited, when we consider that the ancient navigators generally proceeded coast-wise, being too timid to leave it, while obliged frequently to land for provisions, as the small size of their vessels did not afford much room for stores.

During the most flourishing period of Phœnician trade and power, the interval from the reign of David to that of Nebuchadnezzar, 1000—600 B.C., the Greeks gradually became formidable upon the seas, and encroached upon their commerce. Eventually, owing to the conquests of Alexander, they succeeded to the whole carrying trade of the eastern Mediterranean, and to the importation of oriental produce, by a different route. Tyre, after an obstinate resistance, succumbed to a vigorous master in the Macedonian; and the city, whose beauty and wealth is commemorated in prophecy, entered upon that stage of its existence, which, according to the same oracle, was to issue in utter poverty and desolation.

Queen of the far-outstretching seas!  
Where freely sports the wandering breeze,  
That ripples in its playfulness,  
Or wooes with seeming friendliness  
The ocean's ever yielding breast,  
Responding to a welcome guest;  
Or heaves, with a resistless power,  
The billows in the stormy hour,  
As if to prove man's purpose vain,  
To be supreme on land and main.  
Queen of the waves, imperial Tyre!  
Idol of many kings' desire!

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Enthroned in beauty and in pride,  
As like a monarch's blooming bride,  
Without a care upon her brow,  
Without a thought, that what is now  
Of joy will vanish, and her lip  
No more the honey'd sweetness sip :  
Thou sat'st on the Phœnician coast,  
Beside the sea oft tempest-tost,  
Dreaming of long festivity,  
As though no image that could be,  
Of thine, or human destiny !

Where lordly Lebanon on high,  
His tall head raises to the sky ;  
And glittering in the solar beam,  
Or 'neath the pale moon's feebler gleam,  
The everlasting snow that rests  
Upon a hundred tow'ring crests,  
Seems like the blessed mansions fair,  
A better country in the air ;  
Or as the ships celestial,  
Their pennons only visible,  
That sail upon the glassy sea,  
Their voyage of joy eternally !  
At Leb'non's feet, the city lay,  
Envy of nations, in her day  
Of power, and opulence, and art,  
The pride of kings, the wide world's mart.  
The Tyrian vessels ploughed the main,  
From Persia's gulf to distant Spain ;  
And wealth from every foreign strand,  
Was poured into Phœnicia's land.  
Of Bashan's oak, and Shenir's pine,  
The Syrian purple, Helbon's wine ;  
The flocks of Kedar, Sheba's gold,  
The stores that Egypt could unfold ;  
Of cinnamon and ivory,  
With em'rald, pearl, and ebony ;  
Of fruits and flowers of every hue,  
That Dedan and Damascus knew ;  
Of Judah's honey, balm, and oil,  
The merchant princes took the spoil ;  
And all the fatness of the earth,  
To Tyre gave luxury and mirth.

Arm'd men were on the city walls,  
Gay music in the porphyry halls ;  
And many a pulse beat merrily,  
And many a shout of revelry,  
The winds bore onward to the main,  
Re-echoing there the jocund strain.  
Whene'er the stars shone out at night,  
A thousand lamps their radiance bright,  
Threw o'er the bosom of the deep,  
As though to charm its waves asleep.



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The Ethiop in his white symar,  
The Libyan with his scimeter,  
Men of all tribes, of every tongue,  
Ready for traffic or for song,  
With hopeful hearts and busy feet,  
Throng'd in each palace-crowded street—  
Time all that multitude has swept  
Away—and now—no feast is kept  
Where banquets woke the maiden's glee,  
To dance beside the dancing sea.  
Gone like a vision of the night,  
When darkness flees before the light ;  
Pass'd like a vapour of the morn,  
When lustrous day is fully born :  
That scene of glory is no more,  
And scarce a relic on the shore,  
Now marks the spot where Tyre once stood,  
A Queen on earth—her realm the flood !

Alexander's policy, more than his arms, contributed to the decline of the city. Upon the conquest of Egypt, he founded Alexandria, on an arm of the Nile, which by its position, and the activity of the Greek settlers, speedily became the first mart of the world. Ships, trading with the east, landed their cargoes at the port of Berenice on the Red Sea, whence they were transported by caravans to the Nile, and so arrived at the new capital. The Romans, upon their subjugation of the country, wisely refrained from interfering with a natural and prosperous commercial system, and the course of trade between the east and west remained unaltered for a series of ages.

In the most improved state of navigation among the ancients, they were reluctant to venture out to sea beyond the sight of land. Storms must, of course, have imposed this as a necessity, while some trading voyages involved it, and adventurous spirits sought to signalise themselves by departing from cautious and timid usages. Still, as a general rule, mariners kept the high lands, or shore, or some island in view by day to direct them, and depended at night for the same purpose on the position, the rising and setting of certain stars, or very frequently they cast anchor. In the narrative of Paul's voyage in the Mediterranean, the statement occurs, that "sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was already past," which fell about the time of the autumnal equinox. From that period, through the winter, to about the vernal equinox, the Greeks and Romans considered it unsafe to put to sea, not on account of storms, but because the rains then pre-

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veiled, narrowing the horizon of the sailor, while mists hid the land, and clouds obscured the sky. Distant voyages were rarely undertaken, and never directly accomplished. The extreme point was gained by visiting a number of intervening points, often out of the way; for the slowness of navigation rendered it impossible to victual ships for a long distance. The largest vessels of burden were those engaged in the transport of corn from Alexandria to Italy. One of this class was able to accommodate the centurion and his party, who had charge of Paul, in addition to its own crew and lading. They were not calculated for quick movement, being of bulky structure, intended to carry the greatest possible quantity of cargo. Oars seem to have been at first exclusively used for propelling vessels; but sails were speedily introduced to assist the rowers. War galleys were commonly equipped for rowing and sailing, and ships of merchandise for sailing only.

From a very humble beginning, commerce has now grown up to be a mighty power in the earth, remarkable for the value involved in its transactions, the multiplicity of its relations, the distance of its connections, the magnitude of its instruments, and the facility with which the machinery is managed. Besides contributing to the material comfort of millions of human beings, it has been the pioneer of civilization and religion to savage and idolatrous tribes; and even the face of external nature has been vastly modified by its operations. The broad expanse of the ocean once rolled its billows in unobserved magnificence, without a sail fluttering upon its breast; but it is now traversed in every direction by merchantmen and steamers, day and night, and has constantly a large floating population upon its surface, far away from any shore. Cities have risen up on deserted coasts, harbours been constructed, lighthouses erected, rivers rendered navigable, canals excavated, morasses drained, and roads cut through mountain defiles and pathless woods, in order to facilitate traffic; while the most subtle, volatile, and powerful of natural agents is enlisted in the service of the trader; intelligence of prices current, the state of markets, and the condition of crops, flying swift as the lightning's flash from land to land, through no inconsiderable area of the globe.

But truth demands the admission, that while, along with physical improvements, signal benefits of a moral and intellec-

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tual nature have accrued to the world from mercantile dealings, the latter have not been contemplated by the dealers themselves, who have simply had selfish aggrandisement in view. It is also a fact patent upon the page of history, that owing to the rapacious passions of men, commercial intercourse has been conducted upon iniquitous principles, so that while the advance of civilisation has been the remote effect of national intercommunion, imperceptibly grafted upon it by the hand of Providence—fraud, oppression, and almost every species of crime have marked its incipient stages. Happily, owing to the spread of intelligence and the growth of integrity, commerce has become a comparatively purified agent; and for this, as well as for all the unselfish advantages it has yielded, the honour is due to Him who has made the wrath of man to praise him, and overruled evil for good.

It is an interesting fact, that the Jews, though frequently engaged in hostilities with adjoining nations, and a conquering power in the time of David and Solomon, were never at war with the Phœnicians, their immediate neighbours. Whatever private feelings might be created on both sides by difference of religion, language, and manners, they agreed in their public policy to maintain a good understanding. The reason is given in the chapter of Ezekiel so often quoted: "Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants; they traded in thy market, wheat of Minnith and Pannag, honey, and oil, and balm." The Phœnicians could raise but little agricultural produce in their own territory, a narrow slip of land on the coast, of a mountainous character. They drew the supply needed by their populous cities largely from Palestine, where corn was produced in sufficient abundance for export, of such quality as to be preferred to that of Egypt. It was their interest, therefore, to be at peace with those upon whom they were dependent; and equally so that of the Jews who found it of great value to have a near and ready market open for their products, besides depending upon their customers for useful manufactures. Thus international commerce secured friendly relations. This is its direct tendency, and will be its effect, just as communities are purified by intelligence from ignorant pride and passion.

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THERE is an eloquent and well-known passage in Johnson's "Tour in the Hebrides," which has often occurred to the intelligent traveller, and which applies with peculiar force to scenes associated with ancient history or consecrated by sacred story. "To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of the senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from us be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."

It is not without sad solemnity that the thoughtful oriental traveller hears the voice of ancient greatness speak to him from the dust. "*Fuit Ilium*" is one of the sternest lessons which mortality has to teach. The dropping away, one by one, of the dense mass of human beings whose traces are yet discernible, till their names and haunts are altogether unknown; the thought that the human language has no more humbling word than the word "forgotten"; the substitution of the busy hum of interested and active life by silence and desolation; the comprehension by the most rapid glance of the whole remains of what was once gorgeous in art or triumphant in power; the humiliating suspicion forced for an instant upon the mind that there must have been some exaggeration in

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the eulogy of what has left so little to answer to it; these are among the most affecting of all earthly emotions. Thus does mortality protest against man's supposing himself divine! Thus are we reminded that the past is bound to the present by the relationship of decay! And thus does antiquity perform to the self-esteeming "now" the same office which the slave anciently fulfilled, when, seated in the car of the proud conqueror, amidst the honours of his applauding triumph, he muttered in his ears, "Remember that thou art but human!"

We live in an age of disinterments, realizing constantly the paradox that the history of antiquity is but just begun. There are many respects in which remoteness is more favourable to vision than proximity itself. But whilst Assyria, Egypt, and Greece, have been made to deposit some of their best relics in the museums of our capitals, what a host of ancient localities is there which have as yet paid no tribute, or scarcely any, to the superior present. Troy, Babylon, Heliopolis, Sardis, Antioch, Tyre, Ephesus—how much remains to be learned of these! And who can conjecture how much golden ore the advancing current of time shall roll from these quarters down to the feet of future generations.

### THE SITE OF EPHESUS.

Let us go with the traveller, as he journeys over the scenes of Asia Minor—of which Homer, Hesiod, Æschylus, and Euripides sang, and of which Herodotus and Xenophon wrote—scenes of ancient myths, of high adventure, of sacred narrative—scenes where pagan mythology recorded its wonders, and where gospel doctrine claimed its triumphs; and let us rest for a moment with him as he surveys in the ancient district of Lydia, on the borders of the Ægean sea, a poor Turkish village, bearing the modern name of Aiasalûk. From the eminence upon which that hamlet stands—built of materials in which are constantly to be seen the traces of a more dignified antiquity—the eye wanders over immense heaps of chaotic ruin in the valley below. These masses of ancient masonry are partly overgrown by the wild luxuriance of an almost tropical vegetation, and only the serpent, the lizard, and the scorpion, are at home on the spot. The elegant forms of Corinthian architecture, shafts of Ionic columns, and the less graceful remnants of later Roman days, may be traced amidst the

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inextricable confusion. A considerable river (the Cayster), the waters of which were originally clear as crystal, having broken loose from its bounds, wanders at will amidst the ruins, and converts the whole into a malarious swamp. Here and there a corn-field offers a contrast to the surrounding desolation; yet only serves to make that desolation more marked and emphatic. Among other remnants of the past, are the ruins of an ancient theatre, whose circular seats, uprising one above another, may still be traced, whilst numerous arches remain witnesses of its former grandeur. But though the broken masonry is most extensive, not an apartment remains entire. No Christian dwells in its vicinity; there is no certainty as to the site of any one of the buildings which gave to the city its peculiar character. Confusion has done its utmost work.

Such are the ruins of ancient Ephesus. Its position and prospects have undergone a total revolution; "the very sea has shrunk from its shores." Everywhere are visible the traces of the spoiler's hand. The columns which once adorned its temples, and which were the envy of the beholder, were removed by Justinian, to ornament the church of Sophia, in Constantinople. Barbarians pillaged all that emperors had spared; and as the traveller gazes upon the fallen fortunes of so much antecedent magnificence, he shudders at the too visible fulfilment of the threat—"I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

### IMPORTANT POSITION OF THE CITY.

No name was more celebrated in the ancient world than that of Ephesus. It is mentioned by Herodotus as one of the twelve cities belonging to the Ionian union, at the time when those events occurred (whatever the reality may be) which furnished to the earlier poets of Greece the bases of their surprising narratives. According to Justin, the Amazons (who, when their husbands were slain in war, resolved to exterminate the male population around them, and to live by themselves), in the pushing out of their conquests into neighbouring nations, laid the foundations of several cities in Asia Minor, among which were Cumæ, Smyrna, and Ephesus. Strabo, on the other hand, attributes the origin of the city to the son of Codrus, and states Lysimachus, a son of Agathocles, to have

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been the builder of the walls by which it was environed. In honour of his wife, we are told, Lysimachus gave to the city the name of Arsinoë, though it appears not long to have retained that designation. Ephesus stood partly on hills and partly on the banks of the river Cayster; and the facilities offered by its situation for commerce led to the construction, by Attalus Philadelphus, of magnificent docks and wharves, by means of which it reached a pitch of great celebrity. Homer makes mention of a level plain near the river Cayster, to which he gives the name of Asia—an appellation afterwards transferred to the whole of the regions surrounding the locality. Pococke describes the ruins of the ancient walls of Ephesus as extending for a distance of four miles, and as being constructed of rough materials, faced with hewn stone. In his time were to be seen the remnants of theatres and other public buildings, among which was a circus and a gymnasium—the description of which has been given to the world in “The Antiquities of Ionia.”

The position of Ephesus and Smyrna, each situated on the opposite side of a bold peninsula, caused them to be called the two eyes of Greece. In the year B.C. 409, Ephesus was the scene of a severe conflict between Thrasyllus, who attacked it, and Tissaphernes, by whom it was defended, and the Athenians fled discomfited to their ships. ‘Though Ephesus numbered many residents of various nations, its inhabitants were principally Greeks, and the city was celebrated for the refinement and effeminacy which distinguished those of that nation who were settled in Asia. Ephesus was, in fact, a rival even of Athens itself, challenging competition with it in sculpture, and surpassing it in painting. When Rome became mistress of the world, Ephesus became the capital of all the province of Asia, and was called its “first and greatest metropolis.” In the reign of Tiberius, the city was severely injured by an earthquake; but by that Emperor’s order it was reconstructed and largely improved.

## THE TEMPLE OF DIANA.

In these times, Ephesus derived its greatest honour from its widely celebrated temple of Diana—“Diana of the Ephesians.” This edifice was reckoned in its day, not only one of the seven wonders of the world, but the first among the

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seven, and its construction extended over two hundred and twenty years. The description given of it by Pliny assigns to it (for that age) a remarkable magnificence. It was, he tells us, 425 feet long and 220 broad, and was upheld by 127 columns, 60 feet in height. Each of these columns was the present of a king, and was graced with the richest carving. Numerous statues, some of them of pure gold, adorned the temple, whilst cedar, cypress, white marble, and gold, contributed their various beauties to the structure, which glittered from afar to the admiring eyes of the sailors as they drew near the city. The altar was decorated by the genius of Praxiteles, whilst Scopas contributed some of its bas-reliefs. It was the highest honour to present rich presents at its shrine, and the edifice was regarded as the most valuable possession of Asia Minor, the various cities of which had raised it at their joint expense.

This temple was burned down on the night of the birth of Alexander the Great, and the event was ascribed by some credulous writers to the absence of the goddess Diana, who was "on a journey," that she might preside on that renowned occasion. The name of the incendiary was at first forbidden to be mentioned, he having committed the crime that he might receive immortality from his act; but it was afterwards known as Erostratus. It is said that Alexander subsequently offered to reconstruct it in its original magnificence, on the condition that his own name should be inscribed on its portico, but that this was refused.

The temple of Diana was afterwards restored. Among the numerous paintings which decorated the reconstructed edifice, was one of Alexander the Great, grasping the thunderbolt of his father Jupiter, the work of Apelles, which cost 20 talents of gold. The forum stood before the temple, and in its vicinity the great theatre, in which 50,000 spectators could be accommodated at one time. Not far distant was the circus, where, in addition to races and the usual games of antiquity, those terrible conflicts with wild beasts took place, which stamped the days of the Roman empire with the character of indelible atrocity. In the reign of Nero, the renovated temple of Diana was plundered of its rich acquisitions, and these were carried to Rome to feed the Imperial extravagance. The Goths swept off all that Nero had spared.



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The Diana of the Ephesians is not to be confounded with the Diana of the Greeks. This former goddess is believed to have been one of the ancient divinities of Ionia, to whom, from supposed resemblance to the object of their own worship, the Greeks, on settling there, gave the name of their more familiar divinity—Artemis. It was traditionally reported that the image of this goddess had fallen from heaven. If this were so, only a relic of the divinity had reached its destination on earth; for the description given of the statue represents it as almost shapeless; being little more than a log of wood supporting a head, with a staff on either side. Accounts differ as to the material of which this abortion was composed; some calling it gold, some ebony, some the wood of the vine. Like other statues, with pretensions somewhat similar (that, namely, which, under the name of the Virgin, challenges at this day the worship of the superstitious at Einsiedeln in Switzerland, and which, like the heathen image, is believed by its worshippers to have fallen from the skies), the misshapen mass had proved itself indestructible by ordinary accidents, and was said to have survived seven restorations of the building in which it stood.

It would appear that the goddess Diana of the Ephesians was essentially similar to the Ashtaroth of the Phœnicians, and was a representation of the moon;\* or, as it is otherwise regarded, of the all-nourishing powers of nature. The figure of the divinity, as it has come down to us, is that of a mummy standing upright. On her head she wears a mural crown, to signify that cities are under her especial protection; her breastplate bears the signs of the zodiac, to indicate her care of the seasons, and is embellished with pearls; hands outspread, as in the act of benediction, imply that she is engaged in blessing mankind; her numerous breasts convey the notion that she is, as a mother, the source of nourishment to the human family; whilst the sculptured figures of lions, bulls,

\* The moon was worshipped under many various names and forms. No wonder that modern nations should be sometimes confused. The following passage, from a celebrated Roman author, represents a worshipper addressing that luminary:—"O Queen of Heaven, whether thou be Ceres, the fair parent of fruits, and now inhabiting the Eleusinian soil; or whether thou be the celestial Venus, adored in the sea-surrounded shrine of Paphos; or whether thou be the sister of Phœbus (Juno, Lucina, or Diana), now worshipped in the most venerable temple of Ephesus; or whether thou be the Proserpine, dread-  
with nightly howlings," etc., etc.—*Apuleius*.

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stags, and other animals, brutes, birds, insects, represent the various orders of creation as being under her especial care. The symbol of Diana (Artemis) was the bee. In consonance with the notion of her undefiled chastity, her priests were eunuchs; her high priest bore the title of king.

The worship of Diana was a distinguished feature in the superstition of the Ionians. It seems to have held a place in the religious observances of that people not a little similar to the importance ascribed to the Virgin Mary in Roman Catholic regions. Though Diana, like the Madonna, was not in theory held to be a supreme divinity, she often received a homage more resplendent than her superiors. All the inhabitants of Ionia regarded a yearly visit to Ephesus in honour of its great goddess, to be an essential part of public devotion. From the mention made in the sacred narrative of "silver shrines," it would appear that the manufacture of representations of the temple of Diana in that metal constituted no small part of the business of the Ephesians. These were bought, it is probable, both by those who could not conveniently visit the temple itself, and by those who had visited it, as a memorial of what they had seen, and perhaps as a stimulus to devotion.

### THE MAGICAL ARTS OF THE EPHESIANS.

We shall fail to do justice to the superstitious worship of Diana, if we omit to notice those magical arts by which her rites were accompanied. How extensively these dark practices prevailed in the time of the Roman Empire, we learn from many sources, but from no quarter with more detail than from the "Golden Ass" of Apuleius. In that tale the hero is frequently described under the epithet "*curiosus*," which is equivalent to *magus*—addicted to magical practices. Such were "the curious arts" for which Ephesus was famous, and which are referred to in Acts xix. 19. In the same phrase as that used in this verse, Dio Cassius speaks of the Emperor Hadrian:—"Hadrian was exceedingly given to curious arts, and he practised all kinds of divination and magic."

One of these occult practices went under the name of the "Ephesian letters." These were a kind of periapt, consisting of words taken from the statue of the goddess, written on parchment, and worn after the fashion of a Jewish phylactery. In their use they seem to have corresponded with those



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employed in more modern times, passing under the name of charms. They were supposed to cure diseases, to expel demons, to preserve from accidents, and to give good luck. Ephesius was said to have prevailed over Milesius at the Olympic games so long as he had these "Ephesian letters" bound to his heels; but when they were discovered and removed, Milesius threw him thirty times. Hesychius gives the following account of these spells:—"The Ephesian letters, or characters, were formerly six; but certain deceivers added others afterwards, and their names, according to report, were these—ASKION, KATASKION, LIX, TETRAX, DAMNAMENEUS, AISION. It is evident that *Askion* signifies *darkness*; *Kataskion*, *light*; *Lix*, the *earth*; *Tetrax*, the *year*; *Damnamenteus*, the *sun*; and *Aision*, *truth*. These are holy and sacred things." Clemens Alexandrinus thus speaks of the Ephesian letters, to which he makes two references:—

"Certain persons say more fabulously, that to those whom the Jews called Daotyle are to be attributed both the Ephesian letters, and also the discovery of musical rhythm." "Androcydes, the Pythagorean, says, that the letters which are called Ephesian, and are so widely celebrated, hold the place of symbols; that *Askion* signifies *darkness*, for it has no *shade*; *Kataskion*, *light*, because it illuminates the shade; *Lix* is the ancient appellation of the *earth*; and *Tetrax* the *year*, because of the seasons; *Damnamenteus* means the *sun*, because it overpowers; and *Aision*, the voice of *truth*. And the symbol signifies the arrangement of divine things, like darkness in relation to light; like the sun in relation to the year; and like the earth in relation to its production of all the orders of nature."

Clemens goes on to show that similar words and symbols were of common occurrence, instancing as a proof of the former, and on the authority of Dionysius the Thracian, those two Delphic precepts—"Ne quid nimis" (not too much of anything); and "Noce scipsum" (know thyself). Phrases like these conveyed to the initiated mysteries of truth, but to the vulgar they were used as instruments of the grossest superstition.

## IMMORALITIES OF THE EPHESIANS.

Where magical practices like these were current, it may be easily supposed that morality was little regarded. The heathen writers, Apuleius in particular, have not failed to

mark the connexion between the use of sorcery and degrading habits of life; and the customs related by him of the begging priests of Cybele were probably not very dissimilar from those observed by the priests and worshippers of Diana at Ephesus. In his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul animadverts, with a more or less obvious allusion, to evils which we may readily suppose indigenous to such an atmosphere; to "cunning and deception" (chap. iv. 14); to "folly," such as was shown in every part of their idolatrous usages (iv. 17); to "callousness of heart" (iv. 18); "shamelessness," "desperation," "uncleanness," (iv. 19); "lying," (iv. 25); "anger" (iv. 26); "calumny" (iv. 27); to "dishonesty" (iv. 28); to "obscenity" (iv. 29); to "adultery," "vileness," "scurrility," "double-entendres" (v. 3, 4); "waste of time" (v. 16); "drunkenness" (v. 18); to "breaches of the marriage vow" (v. 22); to "neglect of parental duties" (vi. 4); and to "oppressiveness of servants or slaves" (vi. 9). From all which we may naturally infer that these were vices to which the Ephesians were especially addicted. Some of these expressions bear a much deeper meaning than would be in a moment apparent to those who are only familiar with the habits of modern society, and refer to practices "not to be named among us." Polygamy was very common; fornication was permitted even by the authority of the philosophers themselves; atheism was the secret doctrine of the priests; the sages, though they upheld the popular worship in its outward forms, were at the same time its deriders. In numerous passages, the poets of the day exposed and lashed the general immorality, and denounced in the most forcible manner the outrageous degeneracy of their times. Among others, Juvenal declares, "Vice has now attained its zenith."

But the worshippers of Diana were not the only persons to whom the practice of "curious arts," with all the evils which they brought in their train, were familiar. Such studies were extensively followed by many of the Alexandrian Jews who lived in Ephesus. They probably had their origin in the traditions respecting Solomon, many of which are preserved in the Talmud, and are repeated in several stories of the Arabian Nights; but they were increased, as time rolled on, by accretions from Grecian and Oriental sources. Those who practised these arts pretended, like other conjurers, to a large

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acquaintance with the secrets of the mystic powers of nature and of the unseen world, and were despicable empiries, though under the name of religion.

The reader of Josephus will observe some indications of his belief of such delusions, and its influence upon himself. Not to mention his credulous story about the root which grows at Baaras, he says of Solomon:—"Also he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons so that they never return; and this method of cure is practised even to this day. I myself have seen a man of my own country, whose name was Eleazer, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of the cure was thus: he put a ring that had a root of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon, through his nostrils; and when the man fell down immediately, he adjured him to return into him no more, making mention still of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazer would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man; and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon was shown very manifestly; for which reason it is that all men may know the vastness of Solomon's abilities, and how he was beloved of God, and that the extraordinary virtues of every kind with which this king was endowed may not be unknown to any people under the sun; for this reason, I say, it is that we have proceeded to speak so largely of these matters." It is obvious how much mere sleight of hand had to do with such wonders as are related by Josephus.

It may not be uninteresting to the reader to form some notion of Jewish necromancy as extracted from the pages of the Talmud itself. The following story is given by D'Israeli in his "Curiosities of Literature." "Of Solomon, a fine Arabian story is told. This king was an adept in necromancy, etc., and a male and female devil were always in waiting for any emergency. It is observable that the Arabians, who have many stories concerning Solomon, always describe him as a

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magician. His adventures with Aschmedai, the prince of devils, are numerous, and they both (the king and the devil) served one another many a slippery trick. One of the most remarkable is when Aschmedai, who was prisoner to Solomon—the king having contrived to possess himself of the devil's seal-ring, and chained him—one day offered to answer an unholy question put to him by Solomon, provided he returned him his seal-ring and loosened his chains. The impertinent curiosity of Solomon induced him to commit this folly. Instantly Aschmedai swallowed the monarch, and stretching out his wings up to the firmament of heaven, one of his feet remaining on the earth, he spit out Solomon four hundred leagues from him. This was done so privately that nobody knew anything of the matter. Aschmedai then assumed the likeness of Solomon, and sat on his throne. From that hour did Solomon say, 'This then is the reward of all my labour,' according to Ecclesiastes i. 3; which '*this*' means, one rabbin says, his walking staff; and another insists it was his ragged coat. For Solomon went begging from door to door; and wherever he came, he uttered these words, 'I, the preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem.' At length, coming before the council, and still repeating these remarkable words without addition and variation, the rabbins said, 'This means something; for a fool is not constant in his tale.' So, taking the beggar with them, they gave him the ring and the chain in which the great magical name was engraven, and led him to the palace. Aschmedai was sitting on the throne as the real Solomon entered, but instantly he shrieked and flew away. Yet to his last day was Solomon afraid of the prince of devils, and had his bed guarded by his valiant men of Israel, as it is written in Cant. iii. 7, 8."

We should greatly err, however, did we regard the Jewish practisers of magic as simply vulgar conjurers. Some of them, like Simon Magus, were the most daring heresiarchs, and, as we shall have occasion hereafter to remark, exercised a fatal influence for evil.

#### PAUL'S VISITS TO EPHESUS.

Such was Ephesus at the time when visited by Paul. That great apostle twice set his feet in the Ionian capital. His first visit was a passing and a brief one; and though he was urged

to protract it, he would not consent. He took with him Priscilla and Aquila, and left them there, saying: "I must by all means keep the feast that cometh" (probably the pass-over) "in Jerusalem; but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus."\* His second visit was of more importance. It was paid during his third missionary journey, probably about the year A.D. 52. Between the period of his first and second visits, Apollos, an Alexandrian Jew, possessing great powers of oratory, and learned in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, with such additional light as the teaching of John the Baptist had thrown upon them, had preached in the synagogue of the Jews with great effect.

On Paul's second visit to Ephesus, which he reached from Corinth, he met with twelve other disciples of John, who, twenty-two years before, had heard the doctrines which that great teacher had imparted, but had received them so imperfectly as not to know, in spite of John's express declarations — "he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" — whether there were any Holy Spirit. These disciples received from Paul the superior doctrine, and were baptized and made partakers of the charismata, which it was his province to bestow. The apostle's visit was on this occasion a prolonged one. During three months he appears to have preached regularly in the synagogue, but with comparatively little result. Evil influences were at work on the minds of his hearers. They not only did not receive his truths, but abjured and calumniated his teaching. Having, as was his custom, offered the gospel to the Jews, the apostle then turned to the Gentiles of the city with more effect. Withdrawing the few disciples he had gained from the synagogue, he hired the school-room of one Tyrannus, where during two years he preached to all who chose to attend, both Jews and Greeks. He accompanied his preaching by extraordinary miracles, especially adapted to a city where the workers of magic were so abundant and popular. The effect produced by these miracles was so great that the people brought to him handkerchiefs and sashes, that, being touched by his body, they might communicate a healing virtue to the sick and the diseased. The wonders wrought by such means excited the attention of the wandering Jewish Gæstæ. As Paul cast out demons by the name of Jesus, they perceived the mer-

\* Acts xviii. 21.



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quantile value of such a charm, and began to use that sacred name for their own base ends. "And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know; and Paul I know, but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped upon them and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified."\* This whole circumstance so entirely tallies with what is known, from other sources than the sacred Scriptures, of the practices current at Ephesus, that we cannot but regard the narration as remarkably sustained by those undesigned coincidences which so strongly corroborate every portion of the word of God.

The preaching of the apostle, attended by such remarkable attestations, produced other signal results. Consternation seized many by whom magical arts had been professed. They brought their books of sorcery to the apostle, and burned them in public. The price of these books was calculated to amount to "fifty thousand pieces of silver."

The apostle Paul, having made a prolonged stay in Ephesus, was now about to leave that city, that he might fulfil his long-cherished purpose of visiting Rome. His wish to preach the gospel in that great metropolis was indeed to be fulfilled, but by means at present unknown even to himself. "He purposed, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem," and thence to the capital of the world. Sending Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia, he remained, however, for some time in Ephesus, perhaps to make collections for the poor saints whose interests he had so much at heart. By their hands he sent, it is probable, his first epistle to the Corinthians. At this time occurred an incident which constituted a marked feature of the apostle's residence in the capital of Ionia.

We have already mentioned the manufacture of the silver representations of the temple of Diana. One Demetrius was extensively engaged in this occupation. The trade was a lucrative one, and it was seriously endangered by the preaching of Paul and the effects of that preaching upon his hearers. It appeared to many that the popularity of Diana, and conse-

Acts xix. 14—17.

quently their own sources of gain, would become entirely destroyed. Demetrius, accordingly, called around him his fellow-artificers, and represented to them the serious nature of their case. The new gospel not only struck a blow, according to him, at the city of Ephesus, but also at the whole of Asia Minor. Demetrius spoke to interested hearers, and the excitement was great. It spread itself throughout the whole city. Two of Paul's companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, both Macedonians, were seized by the populace, who drew them into the theatre, then the ordinary place for public meetings and popular harangues. Paul would have joined them there, but was prevented by his friends and some of the magnates of the district, who befriended him. The tumult of the assembly, so hastily and extemporaneously called together, was excessive. "Some said one thing and some another." Intent, in this crisis, on their own vindication—for being of a different religion from the Ephesians, and a religion allied to Christianity, they were in no small danger of bearing the brunt of the accusation—the Jews put forward Alexander (probably "Alexander the coppersmith," who, Paul says, did him much evil, and who was excommunicated for his baseness) to defend their cause. But as soon as they heard that he was a Jew, the inhabitants put him down by the clamorous shout, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and continued the cry for "the space of about two hours." In this crisis a public functionary came forward to appease the people. The English translation speaks of him as "the town-clerk." The Greek calls him *grammateus*, the scribe. A passage in Apuleius would seem to imply that this was one of the priests of the temple. ("At cum ad ipsum jam templum pervenimus, sacerdos maximus quique divinas effigies progerebant . . . . . disponunt rite simulacra spirantia. Tunc ex his unus, quem cuncti Grammatea dicebant," etc., etc.) Certain it is that some of the Asiarchs or higher priests were Paul's friends. Whoever this *grammateus* might be, he was evidently a man of some mark. His influence, however, was pacific. The substance of his address was to the effect that there was no need of so loud an outcry; all knew and acknowledged that the Ephesians were worshippers of Diana and of the image which fell down from heaven. The accused persons had not committed sacrilege in heathen temples. If there were a violation of the law, it could be

brought before the proper court. But so mixed an assembly was obviously not the tribunal before which to bring a question of false religion ; and public clamour was, according to every principle of Roman, that is, of arbitrary government, extremely dangerous. He therefore dismissed the assembly. This course was, like Gallio's, on another occasion, extremely politic ; and the Roman administration well knew the value of such mediators among the excitable people over whom they ruled. Seeing that his stay could be of no farther service under such circumstances, the apostle Paul took a quiet leave of his disciples, and departed secretly. The prison of St. Paul is shown at Ephesus. But is there any true reason to believe that Paul was ever imprisoned in that city ?

Referring afterwards to the savage scenes he had witnessed in this city, and to the opposition he had encountered there, both from Jews and Gentiles, the apostle describes himself, with an apt allusion to the gladiatorial combats with which the capital of Ionia, like other large cities, was familiar, as "having fought"—speaking "after the manner of men"—"with beasts at Ephesus." A belief in a future state of recompence could alone compensate for such self-denials.

In the meantime, Timothy had returned to the city, and was carrying on the spiritual work so remarkably commenced. "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge them that they teach no other doctrine." \* A perusal of the Epistle to Timothy (when ever written) renders it evident that the progress of the gospel among the Ephesians was by no means undisturbed. Questions about "genealogies" arose ; the female converts indulged themselves in an expensiveness of apparel by no means consistent with the religion they professed ; hypocrites and seducers were abundant ; young widows brought a scandal upon the church ; gain was identified with godliness ; rich men became proud and overbearing. These, and other evils, Timothy was exhorted to correct with all the force of his pastoral authority.

On the Apostle Paul's return from Macedonia to Jerusalem, though he did not visit Ephesus, yet he sent for the elders of the church in that city to meet him at Miletus, thirty-six miles distant, where he delivered to them a most solemn and affecting address. He declared to them his conviction that he

\* 1 Tim. i. 3.

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should behold them personally no more, and adjured them, by arguments of the most solemn earnestness, to "take heed to the flock over the which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers (or bishops.)" In this language he, perhaps, referred, not alone to the presidents of the church at Ephesus, if there were more than one, but to the pastors of other churches in the vicinity belonging to the extensive body of which we shall speak hereafter. A deep gloom seemed to brood upon his mind as, with prophetic vision, he anticipated the ravages which "grievous wolves" would make in the "beautiful flock." He reminded his hearers of his own disinterested labours as the pattern of theirs, and exhorted them to the magnanimity of which he himself had afforded them so noble an example. Never, so long as the Christian church shall endure, will this pathetic and powerful address of the great apostle cease to be the most emphatic charge which ministers of the truth can receive.

### PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIAN CHURCH.

During his first imprisonment at Rome, the apostle addressed to these Ephesians the letter which bears their name. It came from him as then "the prisoner of Jesus Christ." It was composed after the epistle to the Colossians, and a remarkable similarity may be observed between the two missives, though one of them was to a church of which the writer had only heard by report, and the other to a church which had been blessed by his personal labours. The same messenger, Tychicus, was the bearer of both epistles, and the coincidence between the style of them may be regarded as a remarkable proof of their genuineness, being such as might readily occur from the use of the same pen to bodies not dissimilarly situated, and with no large interval of time between them. The epistle to the Ephesians abounds with illustrations of the peculiar character of the Pauline style. "It exhibits, as Locke has remarked, the tendency to convert an incidental expression into the main topic for the time being, and manifests at once the apostle's richness of mind, and, though perfectly natural, his comparative disdain of the mere conventional laws by which the order of composition is usually regulated. It is the production of a soul firing with its noble topics. It is obvious that throughout the letter there is always the presence of thoughts such as the peculiar position of Ephesus, and of its

inhabitants, might suggest. To those who were familiar with the great temple of Diana, he speaks of the Christian soul as a spiritual edifice, built of noble materials, erected upon "the foundation of apostles and prophets, having Jesus Christ for its chief corner-stone;" and his prayer is that into the temple so prepared the sanctifying Spirit might come, filling it with all hallowed and celestial influences.

Catching from the idolatrous worship of the heathens the idea of their mysteries, which none but the initiated were permitted to know, he speaks in similar terms of the new gospel as a mystery, once hidden, now revealed:—"Having made known to us the mystery of his will"—"by revelation he made known to me the mystery"—"to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery"—"this is a great mystery"—"the mystery of the gospel." Recurring in idea to the riches of the Ionian capital—riches produced by the practice of the idolatry it observed—he refers repeatedly to the doctrine of Christ as indicated by that wealth (an illustration, however, not peculiar to this epistle)—"riches in glory"—"riches of the glory of this inheritance"—"riches of his grace"—"riches of Christ"—"rich unto all that call upon him."

The metaphor of a temple, which he constantly employs in the beginning of his epistle, would suggest different classes of associations, according as his readers were worshippers of Diana at Ephesus, or worshippers of Jehovah at Jerusalem, Jews or Gentiles; and would indicate the incompatibility between the two nations. But the apostle, whilst speaking of the spiritual temple, the Christian church, does not fail to point out that it is a temple into which both Jews and Gentiles are equally admissible. Addressing the Gentiles, he says:—"Remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain

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one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." \* And again he tells us that one point of the mystery, that is, of the religious secret now revealed, was, "that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." † The foreboding which the apostle had of evils hereafter to come upon the Ephesian church, soon to be realised in the extensive prevalence of Gnostic and other heresies, gave a cautionary tone to many of his statements, and increased his desire for the growing spiritual strength of the converts of his ministry. The whole compass of revelation does not present a prayer more sublime, or more rich with spiritual wealth, than that in which, at the close of the third chapter, he intreats that the Ephesians might be fitted to be a habitation of God through the Spirit. Not only is there in this letter the fullest enunciation of doctrine, in a degree indeed surpassing many others, but the most complete code of practical precepts, especially of such as the peculiar situation of the Ephesians might demand. Theodoret calls the concluding chapter "the moral admonition;" and the enforcement of the various virtues of Christian life is such as not only to rescue the religion of the gospel from all truthful imputation of licentiousness, but to demonstrate how much nobler and holier is the character which Christianity could form than any which could arise from the model even of Judaism; and what an entire contrast it is to that which the worship of Diana, even in its best forms, could have boasted.

The absence of those greetings which mark many of Paul's letters can be, we think, most satisfactorily accounted for, by supposing that the epistle to the Ephesians, though nominally addressed to the Christians in that metropolis, was intended for circulation in the various churches of the district of which Ephesus was the centre. For that it was addressed to the Ephesians, and not to the Laodiceans, as some, interpreting Col. iv. 16 after their own manner, have supposed, is the conclusion derivable from all the testimony of Christian antiquity. On this subject Lardner says: "Having examined the principal

\* Chap. ii. 11—18.

† Chap. iii. 5, 6.

Christian writers of the first ages to the beginning of the twelfth century" (we find that) "in all that space of time, there appears not one who had any doubt about it." Ignatius, in his epistle to the church at Ephesus, among others, bears distinct testimony to this fact. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian, in like manner quote the epistle as bearing the commonly received address. Marcion alone expresses a contrary opinion; and that heretic took up his notion, probably, as Lardner conjectures, without sufficient inquiry, even if we imagine his meaning to have been correctly understood. Much weight is justly due to the opinion expressed by Rosenmüller, that when, in writing to the Colossians, Paul speaks of "the letter from Laodicea," he refers to a letter from that church to which the epistle to the Colossians was a reply; and that the epistle to the Colossians, though addressed to Colosse as the more important church, was intended to be also received by the church at Laodicea, as likewise addressed to them.

#### EPHESUS THE SCENE OF THE PASTORAL LABOURS OF JOHN.

The central position of Ephesus, and its influence over the neighbouring cities of Asia Minor, led to its selection by the apostle John as the scene of his pastoral labours after the death of Paul. Indeed, no field of that apostle's labours more required the wisdom, love, and moderation for which he was so eminent. To the "strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythia," Peter had addressed an epistle, sent by the hand of Silvanus; and that epistle points to evils, though principally of a practical kind, which it required all the influence of Christianity to correct. "Hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings," "fleshly lusts," undue ornaments among female professors, "wearing of gold and putting on of apparel" (already referred to in 1 Tim.), dangers arising from the base and unclean practices of idolatry, dispositions to lord it over God's heritage, etc., are enumerated in this letter as requiring friendly warning. It was, perhaps, by their own invitation that John took up his residence among these churches in the capital of Ionia.

We gain from the epistles of John and from the Apocalypse, additional information respecting the district over which the apostle presided. In early times, and in Asia peculiarly, Christians

were called to suffer much from "the blasphemy of those who said they were Jews, but were not, but were of the synagogue of Satan." The persecuting power, which made such havoc of the church, prepared its terrors for all adherents of the Christian faith, and was ready to "cast some of them into prison, that they might be tried;" "false apostles, deceitful workers," as in the days of Paul, spread their nets for the unwary. Diotrophes is mentioned by name, in the apostle's third epistle, as one who set himself in opposition to the true teachers of the faith, "prating against them with malicious words." There were, moreover, a sect of Antinomian teachers, bearing the name of Nicolaitanes, an appellation derived from Nicholas, one of the first seven deacons—as Irenæus and Hippolytus testify—who taught the doctrine of the indifference of human actions to those who had penetrated into "the depths," and who are classed by the Spirit with the worst of characters. "Thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication."

In the book of the Apocalypse, mention is made of the seven principal churches by which Ephesus was surrounded, and their spiritual condition is characterized. The first of which we read is Smyrna, afterwards remarkable as the place of the ministry of the faithful Polycarp; one of the most flourishing of the eastern cities, and then blessed with the enjoyment of a practical religion. The second is Pergamos, capital of the province of Asia proper, then infected by heresies which are termed "the doctrine of Balaam," perhaps by those of the Nicolaitanes. The third is Thyatira, in which the false teaching "of the woman Jezebel"—probably some female member of the community—had infected many by promoting fornication and idolatry. The fourth is Sardis, which was altogether in a state of backsliding and decay—"thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead"—though there were some exceptions to the general degeneracy. The fifth is Philadelphia, troubled indeed by Judaizing perverters, but as yet holding fast its integrity; the only one of the seven churches regarded as worthy of unqualified praise. The sixth is Laodicea, sunk thus early into a state of carnal indifference, "and neither cold nor hot." And to these is to be added Ephesus itself,



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which at this period was departing from the glory of its first religious impressions, though still maintaining a character for piety and activity.

### THE GNOSTIC HERESY.

Already had begun, among these churches, the influence of those Gnostic sentiments which afterwards became so widely diffused. It is not easy in a few words to give a representation of these dangerous doctrines, especially as they branched out into many varieties. The great heresiarch was doubtless Simon Magus, a Samaritan, of the town of Gittæ. The teachings of this man were expounded in a book entitled "The Great Declaration," partly his own composition, and partly that of his followers. The heresy was derived from the Babylonish corruption of religion, mingled with the teachings of Zoroaster. It represented Jehovah, or the Demi-urge, as the creator of the world, often identifying him with the evil principle, and associating him with a class of inferior beings or æons; it asserted the inferiority of Christ to the Father, and tampered with the reality of the doctrine of the incarnation. In the recently discovered work of Hippolytus, much light is thrown upon the opinions of these most dangerous schismatics. So little is their system adapted to the preconceptions of modern, at least of western minds, that it is not easy to realise the seductiveness of such delusions. They had, however, great attractions for minds hovering between Judaism and Christianity, and prone to adopt a complicated system of theology, in which the simple practical results of the latter should be lost. One of these sects, the Ophites or Naasenes, identified "the serpent who tempted Eve" with the Logos of the Deity: they regarded Adam as "the man from above," and, according to Hippolytus, divided "him like Geryon, into three parts," regarding those three parts, spirit, soul, and body, as uniting in the person of Christ: and they asserted that their system was derived from John, the brother of Jesus, through Mariamne, though its tendencies were avowedly licentious. The Peratics, another variety of these heretics, mingled their gnosticism with the practice of astrology, asserting the identity of Christ with the serpent, who is represented as receiving divine powers from the Father, and imparting them to matter. The Sethiani declared the exist-

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ence of three Logoses, answering to the three classes of laws—the temporary, the positive, and the moral. These Logoses were, in different ages—Adam, Eve, and the Serpent; Cain, Abel, and Seth; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Justinians acknowledged two great principles, male and female, designated by them Elohim on the one hand, and Edem on the other; the former identical with the spirit, the second with the soul; or, according to another development, the one being Jehovah, the other Aphrodite, or Venus. This blasphemous doctrine was derived from Simon Magus, and constituted, indeed, the great feature of his abominable system. The following passage will illustrate the atrocious mixture of the sacred with the profane, which made itself manifest in these early heresies. It is the account given by the Justinians of the incarnation of Christ.

“At last, in the days of Herod the king, Baruch” (who seems to have been regarded as a powerful spirit) “is sent, being himself commissioned from Elohim; and coming to Nazareth, finds Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, feeding sheep, being a child twelve years old, and delivers to him the commands of Elohim and Edem, and says: ‘All the prophets before thee have followed in my train. Be persuaded, therefore, O Jesus, the Son of Man, not to refuse to follow, but deliver the doctrine to men, and tell them the truths of the Father and of heaven, and ascend up into heaven, and sit down there by the side of Elohim, the father of us all.’ And Jesus heard the angel, and said, ‘Lord, I will do all these things;’ and he taught the message. But the serpent desired to draw him away; yet he remained faithful to Baruch. Therefore, the serpent being angry because he could not draw him away, caused him to be crucified,” etc. etc.

The heresy of Cerinthus was founded upon the facts recorded in the narrative of the Gospels, though it put them into a form peculiarly his own. Taking the records of the evangelists regarding the baptism, life, and crucifixion of our Lord, it wove them into the following peculiar and blasphemous system. That the world was formed by a power distinct from that of the Father, even by the evil principle (the Demiurge), was the favourite Gnostic doctrine. This was adopted by Cerinthus, who developed the rest of his scheme in the

following manner. He held that Jesus was not born of a virgin, but was the real son of Joseph and Mary, like the rest of men, though surpassing all others in righteousness and wisdom. He taught, moreover, that Jesus received at his baptism the power of Christ, which descended on him in the form of a dove; and that he then taught the knowledge of the Father as well as of all virtues. In the end, however, sufferings drove away Christ from Jesus; Christ, as the Divine Spirit, being always superior to suffering, whilst Jesus, separated from the Christ, died upon the cross. In addition to these dogmas, he taught men to expect the millennial reign of Christ in a paradise of terrestrial enjoyments.

We cannot determine, with any degree of certainty, how far these systems had developed their hideous and dangerous forms, at the time when the apostle John took up his residence at Ephesus. But the poison had then begun to work; and the reader of John's Gospel, but especially of his Epistles, will not fail to perceive that throughout them he makes distinct references to prevalent and dangerous heresies of a type not very dissimilar. It was his object to set forth the Eternal Word as manifested in human flesh, to identify Jesus with the Christ, and to proclaim the hallowing influence of the religion of the gospel. He claims for Jesus the nature and authority, not of a merely derived existence, but of the true God himself; declares the Logos, thus divine, to have been the Creator of the world, and sets forth constantly the words of our Lord as the best antidote to the false teachings of the Gnostics.

The righteous indignation with which this apostle regarded these deadly errors, was conspicuously shown upon a certain occasion, the narration of which appears to have strong claims to be regarded as trustworthy. Its authority is derived from Irenæus, who declares it to have been received from his master Polycarp, himself the disciple of John. When, on a certain day, John was about to proceed to the baths of Ephesus, he was informed that Cerinthus was within the building. With holy abhorrence of so violent an enemy of the cross, John immediately withdrew, saying, "Surely the house will fall in ruins, seeing that the enemy of the truth is within!"

The tradition of the early church is that the apostle John

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ered banishment on account of his faith in Christ, though  
er which emperor is left to inference. Irenæus tells us  
John, at the end of the reign of Domitian, received  
lations which he committed to writing. John informs us  
this took place in the Isle of Patmos, whither he was  
ished "for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus  
ist." There seems little doubt of the fact of John's banish-  
it, confirmed as it is by the unanimous testimony of the  
atic Christians of the second century. Eusebius declares  
t, after his return from exile, on the death of Domitian, he  
earned the Asiatic churches, and that he lived among them  
the time of Trajan.

### ANECDOTES OF THE APOSTLE JOHN.

The following anecdote, illustrative of the life of the  
stle at this period, is quoted from Eusebius, together with  
authority from which is derived a story so deeply  
eresting.

'Clement also, indicating the time, subjoins a narrative  
at acceptable to those who delight to hear what is excellent  
d profitable, in that discourse to which he gave the title,  
What rich man is saved?' Taking, therefore, the book,  
d it where it contains a narrative like the following:  
listen to a story that is no fiction, but a real history, handed  
wn and carefully preserved, respecting the apostle John.  
r after the tyrant was dead, coming from the isle of Patmos

Ephesus, he went also, when called, to the neighbouring  
gions of the Gentiles; in some to appoint bishops, in some to  
stitute entire new churches, in others to appoint to the  
inistry some one of those that were pointed out by the Holy  
host. When he came, therefore, to one of those cities, at no  
eat distance, of which some also give the name, and had in  
her respects consoled his brethren, he at last turned towards  
e bishop ordained (appointed), and seeing a youth of fine  
ature, graceful countenance, and ardent mind, he said, 'Him  
recommend to you with all earnestness, in the presence of the  
urch and of Christ.' The bishop having taken him and  
romised all, he repeated and testified the same thing, and  
ren returned to Ephesus. The presbyter taking  
ome that was committed to him, educated  
herished him, and at length baptized hi

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relaxed exercising his former care and vigilance, as if he had now committed him to a perfect safeguard in the seal of the Lord. But certain idle, dissolute fellows, familiar with every kind of wickedness, unhappily attached themselves to him, thus prematurely freed from restraint. At first they led him on by expensive entertainments. Then, going out at night to plunder, they took him with them. Next, they encouraged him to something greater, and gradually becoming accustomed to their ways, in his enterprising spirit, like an unbridled and powerful steed that has struck out of the right way, biting the curb, he rushed with so much the greater impetuosity towards the precipice. At length, renouncing the salvation of God, he contemplated no trifling offence; and having committed some great crime, since he was now once ruined, he expected to suffer equally with the rest. Taking, therefore, these same associates, and forming them into a band of robbers, he became their captain, surpassing them all in violence, blood, and cruelty.

"Time elapsed, and on a certain occasion they sent for John. The apostle, after appointing these other matters for which he came, said, 'Come, bishop, return me my deposit, which I and Christ committed to thee in the presence of the church over which thou dost preside.' The bishop at first was confounded, thinking that he was insidiously charged for money which he had not received; and yet he could neither give credit respecting that which he had not, nor yet disbelieve John. But when he said, 'I demand the young man, and the soul of a brother,' the old man groaning heavily, and also weeping, said, 'He is dead.' 'How, and what death?' 'He is dead to God,' said he. 'He has turned out wicked and abandoned, and at last a robber; and now, instead of the church, he has beset the mountain with a band like himself.' The apostle, on hearing this, tore his garments, and beating his head, with great lamentation, said: 'I left a fine keeper of a brother's soul. But let a horse now be got ready, and some one to guide me on my way.'

"John rode as he was away from the church, and coming to the country, was taken prisoner by the outguard of the banditti. He neither attempted, however, to flee, nor refused to be taken, but cried out, 'For this very purpose am I come; conduct me to your captain.' He, in the meantime, stood waiting, armed as he was. But as he recognised John

advancing towards him, overcome with shame, he turned about to flee. The apostle, however, persuaded him with all his might, forgetful of his age, and crying out, 'Why dost thou fly, my son, from me, thy father, thy defenceless aged father? Have compassion on me, my son; fear not. Thou still hast hope of life. I will intercede with Christ for thee. Should it be necessary, I will cheerfully suffer death for thee, as Christ for us. I will give my life for thine. Stay; believe Christ hath sent me.' Hearing this, he at first stopped with downcast looks; then threw away his arms; then trembling, lamented bitterly, and embracing the old man as he came up, attempted to plead for himself with his lamentations as much as he was able, as if baptized a second time with his own tears, and only concealing his right hand. But the apostle, pledging himself and solemnly assuring him that he had found pardon for him in his prayers at the hands of Christ, praying on his bended knees, and kissing his right hand as cleansed from all iniquity, conducted him back again to the church. Then, supplicating with frequent prayers, contending with constant fastings, and softening down his mind with various consolatory declarations, he did not leave him, as it is said, until he had restored him to the church; thus affording a powerful example of true repentance, and a great evidence of regeneration—a trophy of a visible resurrection."

Another instance is related by Jerome, of John, equally characteristic. As the apostle lived to extreme old age, he was, in the decline of life, carried into the Christian assemblies, not being able longer to walk to them. He was accustomed at this time, though with difficulty, to extend his hands over the congregation, and to utter these words—all that he could utter—"Little children, love one another!" One of his disciples asked him why he repeated the same words so often? The reply was—"Because it is a divine command, and if it be obeyed, it will be enough."

The apostle John died at Ephesus, apparently about the third year of the reign of the Emperor Trajan, and, according to Epiphanius, in the ninety-fourth year of his age. His remains were carried without the town for interment. Augustine, Ephrem, and Gregory of Tours, mention with credulous superstition the performance of miracles by the dust of his tomb.

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Some Catholic writers, quoting the traditions of the seventh century, state that John was accompanied to Ephesus by Mary, the mother of Jesus. The notion of her assumption to heaven without death arises from the declaration of Epiphanius, that he durst not affirm her death because there was no record of it, and because she might have been translated. It is uncertain, however, whether Mary died at Ephesus, during a residence with the beloved apostle, to whose care her son committed her whilst dying upon the cross, or whether she returned to Jerusalem and died there.

When Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, was sentenced by Trajan to be carried in bonds to Rome, that he might become a bloody spectacle in the amphitheatre of that great city, he, during his voyage, landed at Ephesus. The president of the church there, Onesimus, showed him much kindness in the name of his people, and Ignatius addressed a letter to the Ephesians. This epistle, with two others, are the only ones held and believed to be genuine, and even these have several familiar passages considered more than doubtful. He writes: "We have received your abundance in the name of God by Onesimus, who is your bishop in love unutterable, whom I pray that ye love in Jesus Christ our Lord, and that all of you be like him; for blessed is He that hath given you such a bishop as ye deserve." It is evident that at this time religion was existing in considerable strength in this city.

Before we take leave of Christian Ephesus, we must not omit to mention one fabulous incident received from the untrustworthy traditions of early ages, and certainly not the more deserving of belief because, even to this day, the finger of the guide to ruined Ephesus points out the very spot where the miracle happened—a grotto, namely, upon Mount Prion, one of the hills which commanded the ancient city.

"Among the insipid legends of ecclesiastical history," says Gibbon, "I am tempted to distinguish the fable of the Seven Sleepers, whose imaginary date corresponds with the reign of the younger Theodosius, and the conquest of Africa by the Vandals. When the Emperor Decius persecuted the Christians, seven noble youths of Ephesus concealed themselves in a spacious cavern on the side of an adjacent mountain, where they were doomed to perish by the tyrant, who gave orders that the entrance should be firmly secured with a pile of stones.

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They immediately fall into a deep slumber, which was miraculously prolonged without injuring the powers of life, during a period of one hundred and eighty-seven years. At the end of that time, the slaves of Adolius, to whom the inheritance of the mountain had descended, removed the stones to supply materials for some rustic edifice. The light of the sun darted into the cavern, and the seven sleepers were permitted to awake. After a slumber, as they thought, of a few hours, they were pressed by the calls of hunger, and resolved that Jamblichus, one of their number, should secretly return to the city to purchase bread for the use of his companions. The youth, if we may still employ that appellation, could no longer recognise the once familiar aspect of his native country; and his surprise was increased by the appearance of a large cross, triumphantly erected over the principal gate of Ephesus. His singular dress and obsolete language confounded the baker, to whom he offered an ancient medal of Decius as the current coin of the empire; and Jamblichus, on the suspicion of a secret treasure, was dragged before the judge. Their mutual inquiries produced the amazing discovery, that two centuries were almost elapsed since Jamblichus and his friends had escaped from the rage of a pagan tyrant. The Bishop of Ephesus, the clergy, the magistrates, the people, and, it is said, the Emperor Theodosius himself, hastened to visit the cavern of the seven sleepers, who bestowed their benediction, related their story, and at the same instant peaceably expired.

"This popular tale Mahomet learned when he drove his camels to the fairs of Syria, and he has introduced it, as a *divine revelation*, into the Koran."

The incident has received in the Koran several embellishments, and several more from the commentators on that book. The Koran mentions not only the sleepers, but their dog. This animal had followed the sleepers, it is said, when he went to the cave; and when they would have driven him back, God gifted him with speech. The Koran ends the story of the sleepers thus: "Some say the sleepers were three, and their dog was the fourth; and others say there were five, and their dog the sixth, guessing at a secret matter; and others say they were seven, and their dog was the eighth. Say, my Lord best knoweth their number; none shall know them except a



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few. Wherefore, dispute not concerning them, unless with a clear disputation, according to what has been revealed to thee, and ask not any of the Christians concerning them." Mahommed says, "they remained in the cave three hundred years and nine over." This term is a great exaggeration of the original story, though Simeon Metaphrastes reckons the period at 372 years.

## PRESENT STATE OF EPHESUS.

The description given of the present state of Ephesus by a recent tourist is very striking. "As the modern traveller advances to Ephesus," he says, "the large mosque, supposed by some to be the church of St. John, first attracts the attention amid the ruin and desolation. The voyager is brought at once to a stand-still, when he meditates on the change which two thousand years have brought about. In the days of St. Paul, and for some centuries after, the temples of the Messiah dignified the scene, and the cross glittered in bright gold to the clear cloudless sky and burning sun. But time passed on, and civilization and Christianity fled to the far west. The Christian churches were overthrown, to make way for the mosques of Mahomet. The keble was substituted for the altar. The cross was removed from the dome, and the crescent gleamed in its stead. Dark devastation, cruel tyranny, and cold lifeless superstition, have degraded and destroyed the people; and in two thousand years all has become a panorama of silent ruins. At this day, a weary waste of heaps and heaps of stones, far and wide, with empty mud cottages, are all the remains of this proud populous city of the Ephesians. The clang of arms—the sound of martial music—the screams of the victims when torn to pieces by the hungry hyena—the roar of the Bengal tiger, when angry, for his prey—the loud bursts of applause from the people—the busy hum of the noisy city—the rapturous plaudits in the theatre—the din of the forum—and the swelling stream of voices from the market-place—have long long ago rolled away into the far past and gone by; and silence personified now sits on the still and peaceful grave of Ephesus. 'Thy riches and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, have fallen.' The solitary pilgrim calls aloud, Where is the temple

of Diana and the silver statue made by the crafty Demetrius, which was said to have fallen down from heaven? A sound rises from the rocks in reply, but it is that of the echoes, which say, Where are they? Nothing moves but the mazy Cayster, the waters of which run under the seven arches of the bridge even to this day, changeless still—clear and rapid as ever; further up, the stone embankments, which seem to have been erected for the purpose of confining the river at several places, are still visible. The whole beach looks to the eye a foul unwholesome fen. The silence is broken by the cry of the eagle rising from the stupendous precipices on the sides of yonder mountain. It is broken again by the howl of the herd of jackals, bursting from the jungles in the level hollows at the base of the hill. The rattling voice of the stork gives out a strange sound; and plenty of them are seen seated on many a ruin, hovering over many a broken column, and setting their nests high up in the clefts of the ruined wall. The eye is turned to the boundless expanse of the Great Sea, over which the apostle of the Gentiles sailed to Ephesus. The proud waves swell and fall, and swell and fall again and again as far as the sight can reach, but not one bark now floats on this vast wilderness of waters. No ship filled with corn from Alexandria now reaches this deserted shore. No mariners steer from Corinth, bringing another ambassador of Christ to publish the glad tidings of salvation. No Pompeys, no Cæsars, no poets, no philosophers pass from Rome, to loll away their days in loitering luxury on these burning coasts.

“A few Greek peasants, apparently in extreme wretchedness, are seen creeping about the vaults there, and a few Turks represent the entire population of this city, once so famous. Its streets, formerly crowded, are now ploughed over by the Ottoman serfs. Its squares, once so grand and gay, are now pastured by a few goats; its houses, once so beautiful and elegant, are now the haunts of serpents and the dens of wild beasts. Jackals, foxes, serpents, and storks, are now the tenants of this solitary scene. Down the extensive marsh there are some fishing weirs and a bar of sand, where the river enters the ocean. The solitary visitor seeks for the harbour, and longs to see the beach where St. Paul prayed and parted from his Ephesian converts, who sorrowed most of all because they would see his face no more; but it is impossible to identify the locality, or

even anything like it. The harbour is just another solitary ruin; the sea itself has fled from it and deserted its old and steady companion. Next, the visitor turns his mind once more to the site of the famous temple of Diana. But it was burnt the very day that Alexander the Great was born. Erostratos fired it on purpose, and, being put to the torture that he might be forced to divulge his motive for committing so infamous an action, he confessed that it was with the view of handing himself down to posterity, that he might immortalize his name as the destroyer of so noble a structure. The very site of this stupendous edifice cannot now be properly determined. All its ruins are mingled in the confusion, buried in the rubbish, or swallowed up by earthquakes. A sybilline oracle foretold that the earth would tremble and open, and that the whole temple would be swallowed entirely in the abyss. And, really, present appearances seem to justify the belief that some such overwhelming catastrophe had exactly fulfilled this prediction. The extensive ruins at the head are supposed by some travellers to have marked the site, but like the rest of the mouldings, arches, fallen walls, broken porticoes, and prostrate pillars, they merely show how insignificant the remains of earthly glory may come to be in a very few years. Thus has the secret providence of God disposed affairs too mysterious for man to search into, that the corpses of the three great religions of this world lie buried here in the same grave, without a stone being left to tell that any one of them ever existed. Not a vestige remains of the heathen worship, or of the statue of Diana, or of the church in which she was so vociferously adored. The cross of Christ and him crucified, which was preached here by the apostle of the Gentiles, is proclaimed here now no longer; and, low as either of the other two religions, the worship of Mahomet in this place has almost ceased to exist, and the minaret of the Mussulman is now sinking fast amidst the surrounding devastations of war. Upon the whole, the scene around Ephesus presents a solemn and forlorn sight, awaking nothing but the deepest sensations of melancholy, and reminding us how the Ephesians of old left their first love, and returned not to their first work: therefore their candlestick has been removed out of its place, and the gorgeous city and temple have been swept with the besom of destruction."\*

\* Aiton's "Paul and his Localities."

## JEWISH STORY,

FROM MALACHI TO THE MACCABEES.

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**T**HE period, in Jewish annals, from the age of Malachi to the Christian era, is less known to the generality of readers than perhaps any other in the whole range of history. It presents a dark lull to the many, about which little can be ascertained. Here the Old Testament history ceases, there our curiosity awakes, and accounting the whole interval between as nothing, we resume our acquaintance with Jewish affairs at the commencement of the evangelical narrative. But though a blank in the historical system of most persons, it is not a blank in the series of Jewish annals. That space of four centuries, from the last of the ancient prophets to the birth of our Lord, is in Judea its thrilling life and its stirring events; and the record of these, if not ample and well arranged, is yet often graphic, minute, and generally faithful. If the narrative of Josephus may not vie in literary qualities with those of the Greek historians who treat of contemporary events in their own country, it deserves, however, the attention of the student of history, as being the only connected account of the Jewish people in that period.

We may add that this interval in the condition and progress of the restored tribes has its own peculiar importance, as a connecting portion of the divine dispensations, even though it is not illumined by the gleam of inspiration. It is the period of the restoration of Israel to a new political existence, in virtue of which the ancient dispensation was guarded and

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prolonged to the arrival of one more perfect. It is the interval of imminent peril, yet of critical preservation, to the sacred oracles and institutions, the loss of which must have changed the history of the world. It is the age of the renovated national life of the Jewish people in their fatherland—of the second career of their fortunes—till it terminated in a deeper ruin, and a wider and more forlorn dispersion.

This portion of Jewish history has a further and collateral interest. For it must be remembered that though restored to their own land, and permitted to develop anew their own nationality, in the free exercise of their peculiar laws and institutions, the Jewish people never recovered a perfect independence, except for a short time after the wars of the Maccabees. Judea remained a dependent province of the Persian monarchy, and afterwards of those of Egypt and Syria. Hence its history, as being affected by the vicissitudes of these monarchies, cannot be intelligible without constant reference to the contemporary struggles of Persia with Greece, and of Egypt with Syria. The period we have to review touches upon the age of the mighty collisions of the Persian monarchy with the small states of Greece, whose heroic resistance broke its strength and brought on its downfall. It must be interesting to glance at these events, however cursorily, in their contemporary relation to the surviving age of the prophets, the last of whom must have watched with indescribable emotion the struggles which were fulfilling the earlier words of Daniel. Nehemiah in his youth must have heard the wail raised in the halls of Xerxes, when the intelligence was signalled by the beacon fires of the foul defeat of Salamis; and Malachi survived to the time (B.C. 401), when the younger Cyrus led up the 10,000 Greeks, together with a vast barbarian force, to within forty miles of Babylon, and perished at Cunaxa in the contest for his brother's throne.

One of the difficulties of our task arises from the want of an ascertained and undisputed chronology to guide us through the ensuing period; and to this we may add the absence of any memorable trains of events which would have their definite limits, and admit of a gradual unfolding of view. We have rather to touch on incidents, than to trace a dependent series of events. We hope, however, though with a vague chronological reference at times, to exhibit with

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prominence, and in their just order, the principal events which mark the progress of Jewish history, from the times of Malachi downward to the Maccabean insurrection.

The chief events from the restoration under Cyrus (B.C. 536) to the age of the last of the prophets, (B.C. 400), are the rebuilding and the dedication of the Temple, by Zerubbabel and Joshua, in the times of Haggai and Zechariah, and in the reign of Darius Hystaspes (B.C. 515); the second migration from Babylon under Ezra in the reign of Artaxerxes, the grandson of Darius (B.C. 448); the rebuilding of the fortifications round Jerusalem, ten years later, by Nehemiah; and the reformation of the state, both socially and religiously, under the joint administration of Ezra and Nehemiah. The administration of the latter commenced about the year 438, and continued for a long period, probably till his death. For although he returned to the court of Persia, he again resumed, after a time, the government of Jerusalem, and it is likely there ended his days. Nor can we doubt that under his enlightened and patriotic administration, supported as he was by the full sanction and friendship of Artaxerxes, the Jewish nation rapidly advanced in prosperity.\*

### *The Last of the Prophets.*

The next period, reckoning from about 430 B.C. to the year 390, may be generally identified with the lifetime and prophetic functions of the last of the ancient prophets; and it were an irreverence to his memory, or rather to the succession of holy messengers of truth of whom he brought up the train, not to dwell awhile on this period, and touch on its import and interest. The name of Malachi is historically unconnected with any events in the annals of his time. It occurs nowhere in narrative. Although dwelling probably at Jerusalem, and familiarly intimate with Nehemiah in the last years of his rule, he seems to have taken no conspicuous part in public life. His whole influence, however, and high example as a servant of God, tended, doubtless, to second the impulse given by Ezra and Nehemiah. But his mission, if unconnected with any special occurrences, had its full and effective bearing on his age. His brief utterances fall with deep solemnity on the ear. They touch on the practical evils of the time, and conclude with

\* See the tract entitled "Nehemiah and his Times."

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a prediction which points to the dawn and dayspring of a more glorious economy. They give no hint, however, of the period of four centuries which was to intervene. Malachi breathes not a syllable bearing on the fact, that in him prophecy was expiring—that his were its latest accents—that when his voice ceased, a silence of ages would ensue. Probably he was not himself aware of this. In kindness to himself and to his nation, the grand circumstance was withheld, that a change unknown in their history was to come on, and that their position religiously was to be under new conditions of trial. The prophetic age—at least the period of its greatest splendour, dating from Jonah (B.C. 820) to Malachi—was about four centuries; and exactly the same lengthened period of four centuries was to intervene before the appearance of that precursor of our Lord, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah. We wish to frame no far-fetched conclusion on this fact. Our acquaintance with the divine dispensations is too limited to warrant any such attempt. We may, however, remark that, reckoning from the call of Abraham, there may be traced definite periods of distinct dispensations in the conditions through which the Hebrew people were appointed to pass. It is more important to remark on the present withdrawal of prophecy at the death of Malachi, that it still betokened an *advance* in the dispensations of God. The cessation, dark and ominous as it seemed in itself, and as it was felt during its continuance, was yet in truth a change conducting to a brighter era.

### *Argument from the Cessation of Prophecy.*

It is worthy of notice that there were no *pretensions to prophecy* amongst the Jews after this time, or none at least that were for an instant regarded. But infidelity has affected to treat the whole of prophecy as a pretension and imposture. It was, say infidels, the utterance of enthusiasm, congenial enough to the Jewish character, but, as prediction, false and unreal as the breath of the Sibyl, or the response of the Pythian priestess at Delphi. We need not dwell, in reply, on the distinctive character of the prophecies of revelation; the spirit of intelligence which, apart from their predictive bearing, marks them; their sublime tone of authority and v<sup>al</sup>our; and their invariable faithfulness to the moral ends of

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human life. Neither will we now advert to their predictive truth, which, age after age unfolding, silences and astonishes infidelity itself. But we wish to point out the fact of the *cessation of prophecy for four centuries* to the attention of any who may be disposed to treat its claims with levity. If the illusive impulse of enthusiasm, whence comes it that it so suddenly expires? Were there no elements left in Jewish character that might propagate the imposture? Was their coming history so bare of stirring occasions, that something of the same phenomenon could not be elicited by them? Have we not, on the contrary, in the expiring tones of Malachi, the proof that he and his predecessors spake only as they were moved by the Holy Ghost? They spake not always. Their prophetic utterances had their limit and reserve. Enthusiasm or imposture could have uttered volumes; but the prophecies of Scripture have come to us under the imperative restraint of laws which the minds of the prophets themselves could not overpass.

We think we have not given undue prominence to this epoch in our narrative. Malachi's position as the last of the prophets, and the deep silence in which his final words involved the nation, demanded the pause we have made over his name. Unknown but by the imperishable record of his words, he was the medium of solace as well as warning from the unseen world, to that only nation which then acknowledged the true God, and which yielded, however remissly, obedience to his statutes. His words embedied a legacy of hope which consoled the faithful through many coming generations, and contributed to keep the restored tribes true, in the main, to the covenant of their fathers, till the rising of the Sun of Righteousness. On these last prophecies the devout part of the nation, in times of ensuing persecution and darkness, fixed their faith; and on these, alas! even now, the whole Jewish nation, having failed to recognise the glory of Messiah's character when he came, fixes its eye still, though with faltering vision and failing of heart.

#### THE RIVAL TEMPLE ON MOUNT GERIZIM.

Not long after the departure of the three eminent characters whose names illustrate the preceding period of Jewish history, an event took place which filled the nation with deep alarm.



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and sorrow first, and with permanent and bitter enmities in all after ages. We refer to the erection of a temple by the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim, under the sanction of a Jewish priest. That we are justified in placing this event after the death of Malachi will appear conclusively, we think, from the fact that Malachi makes no allusion to it, which is inconceivable, had it occurred in his own day. Although this apostate movement took place in consequence of one of the just measures of Nehemiah, yet the portentous realization of it, in the erection of a rival temple, was probably wholly unforeseen. Had Manasseh proclaimed at once his design, there would surely have been uttered solemn protest and warning both by the ruler and the prophet, if still living.

It will be remembered that Ezra and Nehemiah had insisted on the repudiation of foreign marriages. This was in accordance with a divine prohibition, dating from the very origin of the Hebrew nation. Their being kept a separate people was essential to the design which Providence sought to fulfil in calling them forth out of Egypt. By no other means, without miracle, could the treasure of divine truth be preserved for so many centuries from extinction. This nation was the appointed ark to bear it safe over the waste waters of ages. The rest of the nations were inveterately given to idolatry. Sensuality pervaded and contaminated their superstition, and enlisted the worst passions in defence of their hideous mythology. This was the sunken state of all the nations, only a few minds perhaps excepted, which rose to the conception of one supreme divinity. Yet even in these, such conception battled still at disadvantage with the encompassing associations of mythology. Thus the idolatry of mankind had become absolutely hopeless of change, till the advent of a dispensation, the time for which had not yet come. Hence the Hebrew people were raised for the express purpose of bearing testimony for the one true God. They were called to this mission, *not* after their numbers had been multiplied to millions, on whom ages of preceding idolatry had made its reign and influence inveterate; but a single family, a single patriarch, was at first called, and consecrated to the wonderful design of maintaining and transmitting, in his own race, the gradually unfolded scheme of divine truth and mercy. Hence the maintenance of the *national isolation* intact was not an arbitrary provision in the divine law, but was

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the one essential guard for its faith and purity, and the indispensable condition, unless a perpetual miracle interfered, of the fulfilling of the grand design of its existence. The Jewish nation could not become a blessing to the *after ages* of the rest of the nations, unless it were kept *for a time* separate from their contact. Alone in the midst of mighty nations, its protest was solitary and feeble against the universal acclaim of idolatry on every side, and it would soon have become altogether silent and extinct, if the nation had been intermingled and lost in the surrounding populations of other races.

These remarks may have perhaps availed to set forth the heinous nature of that step which Manasseh now took, in allying himself with the Samaritans, and proposing the erection of a separate temple. For the *unity of the national worship* had been solemnly ordained, as well as the separate existence of the nation itself. Contrary to the notions of heathenism, which multiplied temples and sacrifices in every locality, there was to the descendants of Abraham but one place of sacrifice, while in all places they might offer the spiritual worship of prayer and praise. The very spot had been marked and consecrated in the ancient temple, and had now, under the sanction of prophecy, been anew consecrated, until the coming of the Son of Man. This unity of the place of the national sacrifice had been fixed in the first ordinances under Moses. There was but one tabernacle, one altar, one holy of holies, one ark of the testimony. The tabernacle for awhile was migratory, till the full establishment of the monarchy, when the fixed locality became identified with Mount Moriah. What impiety, then, was it for a descendant of Aaron to propose a second temple, and that for a population not sincerely amenable to the law and testimony of Holy Scripture! But this was the project which Manasseh accomplished.

#### *Manasseh and Sanballat.*

Manasseh was the grandson of Eliashib, the high priest of the times of Nehemiah, and had married the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite. Sanballat was the chief of the mixed population, consisting of foreigners, and perhaps some remnant of the ten tribes, which had colonized the fertile central plain of Palestine, formerly occupied by the tribe of

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Ephraim, and now called Samaria, after the name of its chief city. This people had retained, or adopted, some portions of the ordinances and laws of Moses, and used a corrupt form of the Jewish worship; but they bore the deepest hatred, transmitted probably from the ancient rivalry of the tribes, towards the new settlement in Judea. They envied it its Persian patronage, and they dreaded its increasing power. Sanballat, aided by some of the Arab chiefs on the south-east, tried at first to frustrate the rebuilding of the temple, and failing in this attempt, the former now sought to share in its services, that thus his people might have free ingress at all times into Jerusalem, and that, by constant association and intermarriages, the Jewish name might be merged in the Samaritan. Nehemiah and Ezra were alive, from the first, to the political as well as religious consequences of such an association, and no less as patriots than in conformity to the clear ordinance of their law, forbade such intercourse, and punished the contumacious with expulsion. The grandson of the high priest was one of these. He refused to part with the daughter of his country's foe. Sanballat forthwith reared a temple on Mount Gerizim, one of the mountains near Samaria, and appointed Manasseh, with some others of the lower class of Levites, to minister in its services. The effect of this measure was to render more intense than before the bitter hatreds of Jews and Samaritans—hatreds which became a proverb to the world.

### *The After Results on the Religious Character of the Samaritans.*

This temple remained for the space of two hundred years, a trouble and an eyesore to the dwellers in Judea. It was destroyed in the year B.C. 109, by John Hyrcanus, the son of Simon the Maccabee, and its destruction was regarded by his countrymen as not the least gratifying of his many achievements. It is right to remark, notwithstanding, that the imperfect adhesion of the Samaritans to the Jewish faith and forms of worship, was not without some good result to themselves, and incidentally it has furnished an accessory evidence of high importance to the origin and authority of the ancient Scriptures. We have no distinct account of the Samaritan character after this period, except from their enemies; and while it may be admitted that the Samaritans ever played a

hostile part against the Jewish nation, and returned their bitter hate with interest, yet we have no security, after the times of Nehemiah, for the perfect truth and candour of Jewish representations. It may have been the fact that the population, though deeply infected with idolatrous notions, really coveted a fuller participation of the religious privileges of their neighbours. They appear, further on in the course of their history, to have gradually rejected the earlier corrupt notions of their ancestors; and, as an effect of the constant reading and inculcation of the law of Moses, their faith worked itself free, and assumed a purer form. At least, it is not to be denied, that the portions of sacred truth in their hands may have operated beneficially to individuals. We wish to hope that there may have been devout Samaritans, as well as devout Jews; and a beautiful incident, in far later times, would seem to give evidence of this. Our Lord's conversation with the woman of Samaria elicited replies which, however humbling to her character, indicate much religious knowledge. The prompt and eager assent of her countrymen afterwards to his teachings, reveals a still higher degree of thoughtful intelligence and candour. They had nourished the hope of Messiah's coming as fondly as the Jews; and they more honestly and humbly judged of, and therefore more fully recognised, his claims when he appeared, than did the main part of the Jewish tribes. Finally, it is more interesting still to advert to the fact that—unquestionably as the rich harvest of our Lord's previous brief teaching, when after his ascension Philip went among the Samaritans to proclaim to them the glad tidings—they received the gospel of Jesus with a unanimity and a fulness of faith and joy which were thought worthy of emphatic record by the evangelist Luke. "There was great joy in that city." (Acts viii. 8.)

*Testimony of Mount Gerizim to the Pentateuch.*

The other incidental but highly valuable result of the secession of Mount Gerizim is, that it carries back the antiquity of the Mosaic Scriptures to that age, and by inference to an age far earlier, and *stamps it with the unanimous seal of hostile nations*. Samaritans as well as Jews received with reverence the laws of Moses as we have them, as the ancient ordinances given from Mount Sinai.

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We must not dismiss this incident, felt by the Jews as grievously at the time, without noticing another circumstance of deepest interest. About 150 years ago, one of our consuls obtained from a remnant people of the Samaritans, who still retain their own locality and traditions in Palestine, a copy of their own Pentateuch Scriptures. This turns out to be distinct in its written character—we mean the forms of the letters—from that which has come down to us from the Jews. Its transmission, therefore is, by an independent channel. It is a treasure handed down to us from Mount Gerizim; and what gratifies all students is, to find that this copy of the Pentateuch, written in a character deemed by some more ancient than that of the Chaldaic Hebrew, agrees in every particular of importance with the Hebrew text brought down to us in the ancient Jewish channel.

### THE DOMESTIC GOVERNMENT AND PROGRESS OF THE JEWISH PROVINCE UNDER THE PERSIAN MONARCHY.

B. C. 400—B. C. 331.

The period on which we now enter is the most obscure, and perhaps the least interesting, in the whole of the Jewish annals. The narratives of Ezra and Nehemiah bring us towards the close of the fifth century before Christ. For the next interval of about seventy years, till the decline of the Persian empire, we have only such brief notices of Jewish affairs as one or two books, or rather chapters, of the Apocrypha can give us. After the overthrow of the Persian monarchy, the light of Grecian history extends, though still very faintly, to Palestine. Yet still these seventy years, reckoning from B. C. 400 to B. C. 330, however undistinguished by memorable events, were on that account most fruitful of happiness to the Jewish province. They were years of quiet and of steady progress in all the elements of national prosperity. The whole period of the Persian rule after the Restoration, which comprehends about two centuries, bore this character; but more especially this last portion of it, after the administration of Nehemiah, and after the fortification of Jerusalem, and, in all probability, of the other chief cities of Judea. All that a people requires for ensuring its happiness and advancement is security from external attack, internal peace, and light taxation. The restless activity of the human faculties, under the all-wise rule of Pre-

vidences, secures the rest. The whole of what may be called the *history* of this period consists of brief notices of the succession of the priesthood, who bore the chief part in the domestic affairs of the province. But in the absence of other matters of detail, we shall avail ourselves of this interval to touch on various points in relation to the internal condition of the people; their form of government; their extent of territory; their agriculture; their traffic, if any, abroad; and such other matters as relate to their national progress.

### *Form of Government.*

After the decease of Nehemiah, the chief influence in the administration would appear to have devolved on the high priests; and, singular as this circumstance may seem, it has its explanation in the peculiar position, at this time, of the Jewish people. All of that part of state administration which is strictly secular, and which relates to revenue, and the enforcement of general allegiance to the supreme government and obedience to law, was in the hands of the Persian governor of Syria, who committed the collection of tribute and other duties to subordinate officers under his command. By the friendship of Artaxerxes I, Nehemiah, and perhaps his brother Hanani, were entrusted with more of this secular authority than fell to the share of any other chiefs of the Jewish tribes after their time. A considerable branch of the administration would, however, remain, with which the supreme power cared not to interfere. We refer to the rights of property and its transfer, the regulations of justice between citizen and citizen, the protection of private persons from wrong, the punishment of offences, and other matters of like nature. But by the constitution of the Hebrew state, the laws relating to these were sacred regulations contained in the Scriptures, and the priests were the persons most perfectly acquainted with these regulations. The constitution was essentially blended with religion, and in the absence of native kings, the remaining part of the administration was in the hands of the priesthood. Questions of peace and war, of levying and paying armies, and the imposition of taxes, they could not touch; but the enforcement of private rights and religious observances fell naturally under their control. The Jewish state under Persia was thus on the same footing as the provinces of the Roman

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empire, in which the proconsuls directed all matters relating to force and revenue, while the natives governed themselves by their ancient laws.

### *High Priests of this Period.*

The high priests, who thus held the chief authority in the Jewish state during the interval we have named, were Eliashib, after him Judas, and then John. Nothing remarkable is recorded of these high priests, except the tragical crime in which the last of them became involved. Suspecting his brother of designs on the high priesthood, he caused him to be murdered within the precincts of the sanctuary. On this occasion Bagoses, the Persian governor, hastened to Jerusalem, and imposed a fine of fifty drachmas on every lamb offered for sacrifice. This heavy imposition, which affected the whole people, was inflicted from resentment of a personal affront to himself, rather than indignation on account of the crime perpetuated in the temple. Bagoses advancing to enter into the temple, was for a moment checked by the priests, as about to profane consecrated ground. He persevered, exclaiming, "Am I not purer than the dead body of him whom ye have slain in the temple?" This instance warned them how perilous it might still be to forget their dependent position under Persia.

### *Increase of Population and Territory.*

The gradual increase of the Jewish province in population, in the extent of occupied territory, and in the results of agriculture, can be judged of only conjecturally, by a comparison of their limited numbers and resources at the Restoration, with a general estimate of their wealth and power in after times. A people who, in the times of the Maccabees, could resist the armies of the powerful kingdom of Syria, and win their independence at the point of the sword, must have made rapid progress at every stage of the preceding interval, and perhaps not the least rapid during the profound quiet which they shared under the Persian monarchy. The last seventy years of that period, during which the Persian empire, though involved in no extensive wars, was verging to its decline, were especially favourable to the Jewish province. The Jews numbered some 50,000 in the times of Zerubbabel; they were now become a nation. It was with difficulty that Jerusalem could

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ain occupants in the time of Nehemiah ; after it had been  
tified, and had become the seat of government, and riches had  
un to flow into the temple, wealthy families more and more  
de the capital their home. The rural classes of the popula-  
a at first were dispersed on their patrimonial inheritances  
ough the land—wherever, at least, they could occupy in  
ety. With the lapse of years families multiplied, and land,  
h for tillage and for vines, came by degrees into cultivation.  
e proverbial fertility of their soil rapidly augmented their  
res, and traffic exchanged these stores into wealth, and  
mulated culture still further. By degrees the nation ex-  
ided itself to the west and the south, and with the restoration  
ancient cities and hamlets, arose the thickly studded picture  
rural homes and farms, corn fields, vineyards, and fallow land,  
er the re-possessioned valleys of Judea, from Bethel to Beersheba.

#### *Intellectual Progress.*

It is a speculation of much moment in relation to any people,  
inquire how far their intellectual culture has kept place  
ith their progress in what may be termed outward and  
aterial interests ; whether they have made any advance in  
ts and literature ; or, if they are deficient or tardy in these,  
hat may have been, nevertheless, the condition of the people  
tellectually, in point of general knowledge and sound think-  
g. Admitting, as we are fain to do, that the Jews, after the  
estoration, furnish little or nothing to report of with respect  
the products of the Imagination and Taste, or even of specu-  
ation and philosophy, we may yet claim for them, as a people,  
higher degree of thoughtfulness and intelligence than, in the  
bsence of a highly cultivated literature, the reader of their  
istory might be apt to ascribe to them. In virtue of the  
ublime revelation in their hands—the inspired writings of their  
awgiver, their bards, and their prophets—and of the familiar  
xposition of these in their synagogues and homes, the Jewish  
amilies, down to the inquisitive youth and the maiden who  
ended their flocks, were infinitely more elevated in thought  
han the populations of the countries around them. The  
higher class of minds in the nation would have felt themselves  
restricted, probably, by the reverence they bore their own  
acles and institutions from the cultivation of one imaginative  
form of literature, struck forth in that very age by the



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genius of Greece. The brightest period of the drama at Athens was contemporary with the age of Malachi. It rose at once to its highest brilliance in the hands of a triumvirate of tragic poets who left no successors; but it was interwoven with a mythology which the better instructed Jew dare not adopt or even distantly imitate. He, however, inherited already a literature of a different form, which, based on eternal truth, rejected not the colours of imagination, but abounded in passages of awful grandeur and tenderness, that may compare with whatever is most sublime in the choral strophes of *Æschylus*, or most touching in the scenes of *Euripides*.

It is not our wish to represent the Jews, in the age we speak of, as a people of genius, but simply that the Jewish people, intellectually, were raised high above the level of the Asiatic nations around them, by familiar and devout acquaintance with products of thought which surpass those of human genius; and hence that their intellect, if not polished and cultivated, was awake, enlightened, and thoughtful. We may add that, in philosophy and oratory, which were developed in Greece when the drama was on its decline, the speculation which in Greece was stimulated by the uncertainty and obscurity which encompassed the mind on many momentous questions, in Judea was superseded by the clear light which revelation had cast on all these questions. Speculation did indeed arise in Judea, and divide itself into schools and sects,\* but not till after the cessation of living prophecy; and the traditions of it survive alone in the brief allusions of *Josephus*, or in the Rabbinical literature of a far later age. For oratory, it may suffice to remark, that the political subjection of the Jewish provinces precluded the incentives to its noblest exertions; though we will not affirm that the capacity for such efforts manifested itself in any high degree amongst the Jews at any period. The proper authentic Jewish literature of the age after the Restoration, or rather its scanty remains, are to be found in the books of the *Apocrypha*. Some of these are monstrous legends, but there are others which contain passages of rich and devout sentiment and didactic instruction, composed after the models left by the wisest of Jewish monarchs, that merit a better fate than the

\* See Tract on Jewish Sects.

utter contempt and oblivion to which they seem to be at present consigned.

### *Religion.*

With respect to a people whose chief mission, under the express destination of Providence, was a religious one, it is not unimportant to inquire how far, after their restoration from exile, they appear faithful to this design, by upholding in its integrity the authority of revelation, and by their consistent observance of its holy precepts. The reply to this would be various, according to the standard by which we judge of them. Judged by the *highest* standard, the nation may be pronounced still to exhibit much laxity of faith and morals. Very many amongst them were justly obnoxious to the solemn reproofs and warnings of their last prophet. But, on the other hand, there were those who evinced the depth of convictions founded on revealed truth, by a devout and practical consistency worthy of the best times of their history. There was in this period, as in every former age, a true spiritual church of God in the midst of this nation. Nor are we to deem the number small of those families, throughout the land, in which a spirit of fervent piety was cultivated. If we remember that the piety of such families in this age prepared the martyrs for divine truth in the next generation, we shall not readily account such piety defective, either in its principles or its practical manifestations. Up to the period of which we are now speaking, and while the nation continued under the Persian monarchy, it had not extended its intercourse much beyond its own territory. Secluded in its own valleys, the nation lived under the unmixed influence of its own institutions. From idolatry, under the forms of Orientalism, it had recoiled for ever; and it had not yet come in contact with the more seductive fascinations of European mythology, as fashioned and adorned by the Grecian mind. On the whole, then, if we compare the Jewish people religiously, either with the age before the Captivity, or with a far later age in the times of our Lord, we think there is reason to pronounce them at this time more single-minded in their adherence to the divine law than at either of the other periods named.

Let us now hasten to the more stirring scenes of the Macedonian conquest and the downfall of the Persian empire—

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events which placed the Jewish province under new conditions, politically and morally.

### CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES.

As the interval from the age of Nehemiah to the decline of the Persian empire passed unmarked by any memorable occurrence in Judea, with the one great exception we have named; so the epoch on which we now enter, full as it was of terror and trouble and mighty change to Asia, came over the Jewish nation so lightly, nay, so benignantly, that in its immediate effect it rather enhanced than diminished their happiness and prosperity. Its remoter effect, however, brought on what may be regarded as a complete revolution in their condition, and involved consequences of deep moment, which, however obvious now, were at the time little foreseen. In this section, accordingly, we shall have little of incident to relate, but we shall have to touch upon the chief effects of the Macedonian conquest, not only on the destiny of the Jewish people, but on higher interests, to which even their destiny, politically, was very subordinate.

#### *Greece from the Defeat of Xerxes to Alexander.*

It is necessary for us briefly to advert, at this stage, to the political relations of Persia with Greece after the terrific and obstinate attempts of the former in the fifth century B.C. to reduce the Grecian states under her yoke. The humiliation and defeat in which these attempts resulted are well known. The Persian invasions resulted, however, in an effect upon Greece, little calculated on by her foes or even by the most sanguine of her patriots. The conflict of these frontier European States with the gigantic monarchy of Asia, of which they had long stood in dread, called forth energies which not only flung back the force of the enemy, but rapidly developed the resources and genius of Greece beyond the brightest dream of its first defenders. The part which Athens took in these struggles and victories entitled her to the supremacy she soon afterwards asserted, and kindled the emulation and enthusiasm of her people, till she became in intellect and in art the wonder and model of all time.

Seventy years ensued, in which the Athenian republic, after the building of the long walls of the Piræus, and the develop-

ment of her maritime power, wielded the energies of an empire over the *Ægean* Isles and the Greek colonies of the Asiatic coast, more limited in extent indeed than that of Persia, but immeasurably richer in wealth and in the quality of its force by land and sea. Westward of the Isthmus of Corinth, Sparta held the balance of power against her, but ineffectively. Under the administration of a succession of statesmen and generals, as sagacious in policy as they were brave in action—of Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles; of Cimon, Thrasybulus, and Conon—Athens became mistress of the Mediterranean, of its isles and shores; while at home the era of her genius and literature broke forth into a resplendent dawn in the works of her sculptors and painters, in the creations of her tragic poets, and in the compositions of her unrivalled historians. The unfortunate issue of the expedition against Sicily reversed her position politically, but arrested not her progress in arts and in literature. The age of her philosophy and eloquence followed that of the drama, and evinced in a different direction powers equally sublime. The contest with Sparta, Corinth, and Epidamnus, ended in the revolt of her *Ægean* allies; and the loss of the Athenian fleet at *Ægospotamus* terminated in the surrender of Athens itself, and the rule of the thirty tyrants imposed on the Attic state by the Spartan general, Lysander. Thrasybulus soon regained the freedom of his native city, and Alcibiades recovered a part of her foreign dominions; but from this period—the end of the Peloponnesian war (B.C. 404)—Sparta held the supremacy in Greece, till the rise of the Theban state under Epaminondas. In the midst of these contests of the Grecian states, Persia was in no condition to re-assert her former superiority. She played the part of alternately assisting both Sparta and Athens, so as to keep either from attaining an undisputed sovereignty in Greece and on the *Ægean*. Two events had, however, taught Persia forbearance and fear. One was the expedition of the ten thousand under the younger Cyrus (B.C. 401), who, penetrating into the interior, almost to the gates of Babylon, disclosed the weakness of the empire, and in their successful retreat, braved the mighty armies in their rear. The other was the victory of Conon at Cnidus, which obliged Persia to submit to a treaty receding from all claims of territory to a distance of thirty miles from the coast. It is conjectured that the rebuilding of

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the fortifications of Jerusalem, which lay at this distance from the sea, as an important Persian fortress, was permitted in consequence of this Athenian victory.

### *Philip of Macedon.*

It was not, however, from Athens or Sparta that Persia had ultimately to dread attack, but from a people north of Greece proper, which, though originally of the same race, had not hitherto been recognised as part of the Grecian community. After the humiliation of Sparta by the Theban armies under Epaminondas at Leuctra (B.C. 371), and afterwards at Mantinea (362), the states of Greece, now weakened by mutual contest, marked with alarm the rapid extension of the Macedonian kingdom, both westward over Epirus, and eastward to the walls of Byzantium, under the restless efforts of Philip's ambition. The social war which soon followed (351), deprived Athens of most of her remaining allies; and the two Sacred wars, the first begun by Thebes against Phocis, in which Philip took part, and the second conducted by Philip against Amphissa, for some pretended violation of the sacred territory around Delphi, brought Philip's armies into Boeotia, and terminated in his victory over the Athenians at Chæronea (338), which left no rival to Philip's power, and was fatal for ever to the liberties of Greece.

Philip being now in command of all the states of Greece, from the promontory of Tænarum to mount Hæmus, began to cast his eye on Asia, and to meditate, more in the spirit of ambition than of Grecian patriotism, a determined attack on the Persian empire. The Grecian states had no power to refuse contingents of troops and money, and the preparations were rapidly made by Philip for the expedition.

### *Alexander the Great.*

A stroke, however, from the hand of Pausanias, a prince who commanded his body-guard, brought Philip to an untimely end, and the Macedonian kingdom devolved on a youth not quite twenty years of age. The interval of Philip's death, his son being absent in Epirus, appeared to Demosthenes, and perhaps to Phocion and other patriots at Athens, as sent by the gods for the recovery of Grecian independence. But that youth who had succeeded his father was Alexander, and

his sudden appearance in Bœotia, with a powerful army, before his movements had been even suspected at Athens, extinguished their hopes and enthusiasm, and gave token of the decision and rapidity of genius of the Macedonian hero, who already stood prepared for the conquest of the world. He suffered no delay in the expedition planned and prepared by his father. With a force of 32,000 foot and 5000 horse, he marched to Byzantium, already in his hands, crossed the Hellespont, and advanced to avenge Greece, in the year B.C. 334, for the attacks of Persia in the year 480.

*Siege and Capture of Tyre.*

Three pitched battles broke the power of Persia, and raised Alexander to the throne of the East. The first was at the Granicus, in which Alexander defeated the satraps of Darius; the two last at Issus and Arbela, in which he encountered and defeated Darius himself. But before the battle of Arbela—a town beyond the Tigris—Alexander, deeming it unsafe to leave any towns on the coast unreduced, undertook the siege of Tyre and Gaza, and the conquest of Egypt. The siege of Tyre was the most memorable of his achievements, and furnishes the most striking instance of the fulfilment of prophecy.

Tyre was originally built on the continent, and was one of the most ancient cities of Phœnicia, the emporium of the East, and the parent state which had founded Carthage, Gades, Leptis, and other maritime cities. It was first reduced by Nebuchadnezzar, after a siege of thirteen years' duration. After this, the inhabitants had selected for their new city the safer situation of a small headland connected with the main land by a narrow neck of rock. Thither had been removed the materials of the ancient city, and the Tyrians had reared a new and better defended capital of that ancient state, whose fleets had so long swept the Mediterranean and the shores of the Atlantic.

Dreading to leave any possible nucleus of force in his rear, Alexander would not relinquish the capture of Tyre, even at the cost of delaying his final conflict with Darius. In the second year of the siege, Tyre was taken and totally destroyed, and the very rock in a manner made bare, as prophecy had foretold. Gaza also, about the same time, and for the same reason, was captured and destroyed.

*Alexander's Clemency to Jerusalem.*

The fate of Jerusalem was far different. The account which Josephus gives of Alexander's entrance into Jerusalem is probably familiar to the reader. Historians suspect this part of Jewish traditions to have assumed the form and exaggeration of a legend, rather than to be a literal account of what took place. Yet the basis of the legend must be held as authentic, being supported by the admitted fact that Alexander did not take Jerusalem by siege, or attack its population, but received its submission as a friendly city. The probability also arises almost to certainty, that he must have personally visited a city of so much importance as the chief central fortress of Palestine, and whose fame as the capital of an ancient people, and of an illustrious line of monarchs, could not have been unknown to him. To add one circumstance more; it is not improbable, further, that when Alexander advanced, attended by his generals and by his body-guard, towards the holy city, he should have been met at Sapha by an array of the priesthood and nobles, to offer him the submission of the nation, now that the Persian monarch, defeated at Issus, had retired in alarm and despair beyond the Tigris. The legendary part of Josephus's account is, that when Alexander beheld the high priest arrayed in his robe of purple, and perceived on the embroidered tiara of Jaddesus the emblazoned letters of the Divine name, he was suddenly stricken with awe, dismounted from his charger, and approached to do homage to the high priest; at the same time observing, in answer to the questioning glance of his general Parmenio, that he did homage, not to the Jewish priest, but to the divinity whom he represented, and the symbol of whose name he recognised as that which he had seen in vision before his departure, at Dium, on the coast of Thessaly.

This circumstance, to which the later vision of Constantine on the eve of his battle with Maxentius bears a singular analogy, may not be admitted as authentic. Yet there were not wanting elements in Alexander's character which might almost tempt us to accord full credit to the Jewish historian's legend, at least so far as that Alexander rendered such homage, and perhaps gave such representation. With an eagle-eyed penetration which instantly discerned strategical and political

consequences from afar, and a force of will which bounded forward to their attainment, there was mingled, in the genius of the youth who now set his foot on Persia, a spirit of romance and enthusiasm more like that of a wandering bard, than what might have been looked for in the conqueror of nations. Arrian, the Greek historian of Plutarch's time, relates of him that he lingered around the ruins of Troy, that he visited the tombs of Priam and Achilles, and that he lamented his own fate in having no Homer to recite the story of his conquests. He had studied under Aristotle, whose pupil he had been for five years, the heroic legends of Greece in the immortal strains of her bard. He had read in the father of history, the later recitals of her resistance to Persia; and thus an enthusiasm to emulate and surpass the bravest of her sons, mingled with the sagacity and heroism which conducted him to the wished-for height of his destiny. It is not therefore an inconsistent circumstance in the narrative of his conduct, on meeting the Jewish high priest, that the conqueror should have been filled with veneration and awe, however illusive may be the idea of his previous vision.

Dismissing these questions, it is certain that the fate of Tyre and Gaza befell not Jerusalem. Its gates were not closed against the conqueror. No resistance was attempted; but the high priest and the chief authorities, whether or not influenced by the predictions of Daniel is uncertain, welcomed the Grecian hero as a conqueror and a friend. The result was that Alexander left them in full possession of their treasures and their native laws, and besought their intercession with the Deity they worshipped. He proceeded thence to the conquest of Egypt, and in the following year (331) he fought his last chief battle against Darius, and after the flight of the latter from Arbela, and his murder by two of his attendants, Alexander received the submission of the Persian provinces as far as the Indus, and entered as lord and sovereign into the palace of Xerxes.

We may not follow the conquests of the Greek hero; but must confine ourselves to touch upon his reign simply as it affected the position of that people with whose history we are here concerned. His reign was brief, not extending, from the battle of Arbela, more than ten years; but while it lasted, its influence on Judea was politically in the highest degree



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favourable. Judea suffered none of the calamities of conquest. The province was probably even more lightly taxed than under Persia. While the Samaritans, their neighbours, drew upon themselves a heavy chastisement by their revolt and by the murder of the Macedonian governor, the Jewish people enjoyed, with the single exception of an act of cruelty by Ptolemy Lagus, the most perfect peace and large indulgence.

### *Immediate and Remote Consequences of Alexander's Conquest.*

It is a mighty event in the history of any people, for them to be transferred to a different master, and much more to become subject to a ruler and people, risen from a distant land, speaking a new language, and characterised by new usages and manners. That this change should have involved no present suffering or calamity to the nation, the Jews could not but regard as cause for fervent gratitude to that overruling Providence in which they believed, and for stedfast faith in prophecy, which in the words of Daniel had so clearly foretold the change. But consequences were unfolded in the train of Grecian conquest, which connect it with the interests of Christianity, and through this medium with the welfare of mankind at large through all coming ages. The Grecian conquest spread the light of a brighter civilization over the East; and although its influence was contracted within narrower limits after a few generations, yet this civilization permanently impressed itself throughout Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. The Greek language and Greek literature from this period spread on the eastern and southern shores of the Mediterranean. In every city of note, the Greek language became the familiar speech of learning and of commerce. Alexandria became the centre of a later Greek literature. To the conquest of Alexander is it that we owe the fact, that the ancient Scriptures, two hundred years before Christ, were rendered into the Greek version of the Seventy, and that thus the oracles of God received a new guarantee for their authenticity and preservation. Finally, to the thoughts and deeds of the pupil of Aristotle in subjugating Asia, are the nations of Europe indebted, under the disposal of an overruling Providence, for the fact that the inspired narratives and epistles of the New Testament were composed in the well-known dialect of Greece.

## FROM MALACHI TO THE MACCABEES.

### JUDEA UNDER THE GREEK SOVEREIGNS OF EGYPT.

B.C. 321—B.C. 217.

The death of Alexander, in the year B.C. 323, threw open the sovereignty of the East to the competition of his generals. For, notwithstanding their professed devotion to their master whilst living, they sacrificed without pity, or permitted to be sacrificed, every branch of his family. Four of these generals founded mighty monarchies for themselves, which lasted till the advance of Roman conquest absorbed them into its own dominion. In this division, Seleucus gained Babylon and Syria, Ptolemy seized Egypt, Antigonus established himself in Asia Minor, and Antipater in Macedonia. We may here remark, with respect to the fate of Alexander's conquests, that although after his death his empire was thus divided, yet these four monarchies still subsisted under a Grecian rule and a Grecian form. The effect of his victories and policy was permanent. The impress of Grecian valour and dominion upon Asia remained for ages. It was five centuries before Persia recovered its freedom from a Greek dynasty; and the Greek dynasty of Egypt continued until it fell in Pompey's time, before the armies of Rome. Thus the conquests of Alexander were not like the fabled victories of Bacchus or Sesostris, who conquered kingdoms with ease, but retained nothing; and it may justly enhance our admiration of his sagacity and force of genius, or perhaps of the superior energy of the Greek character, of which race he was the leader, that such endurance should have been stamped upon their acquisitions.

Palestine was claimed at first by Antigonus, but after a destructive warfare he was defeated at Ipsus, and Ptolemy gained firm possession of the province, and attached it to the Grecian monarchy. In this first contest for Palestine, Jerusalem appears to have escaped the horrors of war, the chief points of the struggle being the maritime towns, Tyre, Joppa, and Gaza. Ptolemy at last advanced against Jerusalem, and took it with ease by the policy of making his attack upon it on the Sabbath. He met with no resistance, as the Jews scrupled even to act in self-defence on that day. He removed about 100,000 captives from Judea, and settled them chiefly in Alexandria and Cyrene; but shortly afterwards he enrolled about 30,000 Jews as a militia, to defend the chief garrisons

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of their own country, and thus attached the nation to his interests. The numbers here given, both of the colony of Jews transported to Egypt, and of the remaining native force of men able to bear arms, furnish another indication, added to those we have formerly given, of the rapid increase of population which had taken place in the two first centuries after the Restoration.

### *Alexandria—its Traffic, and Greek Literature.*

One of the chief measures of Alexander, during his brief sojourn in Egypt, was to select a spot for a maritime city, which should become a permanent emporium of traffic between the East and West, and be the seat of government in that part of his empire. With this view, he founded the city of Alexandria, which remains and flourishes to this day, a monument of his profound policy and sagacity. The ancient monarchs of Egypt eschewed the sea: they built no maritime towns, and for ages possessed no navy; nor did they encourage, for a long period, the access of other commerce to their shores on the Mediterranean. Alexander divined a different policy. He resolved, by connecting Egypt with the sea, to raise her into a maritime power, and to make her the channel of traffic from the Indies to the west of Europe. This destiny she fulfilled in a splendid degree, till the discovery of the passage round the Cape, and fulfils in part to this day.

Alexandria rapidly rose and flourished. Peopled chiefly by Greeks, the new city became the seat of a later Greek literature, after the decline of that of Athens and Corinth. Here the schools of the later Platonists gained celebrity, and a second era of Grecian speculation found its development. In this new capital of Egypt, Plato and Aristotle, and the whole band of Greek writers, were studied; and to the libraries founded by the Ptolemies, the world became indebted for the preservation of many of their writings. Here Plotinus commented on Plato in the third century of the christian era; and here, at the same period, Ammonius and Origen discoursed in the dialect of Greece of the things revealed in the Hebrew and Christian oracles.

### *The Jewish Colony in Alexandria.*

But it is with especial reference to the fortunes of the Jewish

people, and its effect upon their literature, that the founding of Alexandria merits our attention in these pages. The removal of so large a proportion of the population as that stated, to a foreign land and a half-built city, seemed at this time the most distressing calamity that could befall a people. Besides the miseries of captivity, and the rupture of the ties of home, of friendship, and kindred, the cruel measure of Ptolemy Lagus struck a deep blow on the industry, resources, and prosperity of a nation just beginning to feel its own strength. But the subsequent more liberal policy of Ptolemy in entrusting the Jews with the defence of their own garrisons, was followed out in Egypt by the concession of larger freedom to the Jewish colonists at Alexandria and Cyrene. The Jewish population multiplied and prospered in their new home, and by their importance and influence in the capital of the Ptolemies, as well as by maintaining constant intercourse with their brethren in Judea, they contributed to secure for their native land a more benign policy. The reign of the first three Ptolemies, accordingly, was on the whole most indulgent towards the Jews, and constituted the epoch of their highest prosperity, till their fortunes became overcast by the tyranny of other masters.

More than this, the building of Alexandria, and the transference to it of so large a colony of Jews, was the step necessary in the destination of Providence for placing the Hebrew race in immediate contact with Greek literature. From this time the Jews of Alexandria, while conversant with their Hebrew Scriptures, spoke the language of Plato and Thucydides, and after a time became, doubtless, familiar with their writings. Thus there arose amongst them a higher education, and a freer development of thought; and after a few generations a class of educated men arose who were familiar with Greek from their infancy as Greeks themselves were familiar with it, and who yet possessed a perfect command of the ancient language of their Scriptures. This combined and perfect acquaintance with both languages was the high qualification necessary for interpreting the Scriptures of the law and the prophets into the philosophical language of the world; into that marvellous fabric of speech, which the rising intellect of the west, which Cato in his age and Cicero from his youth, were to acquire, and which was not to be annihilated by Roman conquest, but

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to spread amid the ruins of Grecian states and Grecian power, into a more extended and imperial sway. Into this dialect, under the guidance of Providence, the preparation was now laid, in the measures, first of Alexander, and then of Ptolemy, his successor in Egypt, for embodying the glories of a divine revelation.\*

### *The ruling High Priests at Jerusalem—Simon the Just.*

The immediate successor of Jaddueus, in the priesthood and in the civil administration in Jerusalem, was Onias I. who for a period of twenty years, during which the contest took place for the possession of Palestine, administered Jewish affairs with equity and wisdom. After him came Simon the Just, whose memory became deeply endeared to the nation, both on account of his eminent piety and his upright and wise conduct as a ruler. The eulogium on this eminent father of his people, given in the Apocrypha, caught the eye and kindled the admiration of the celebrated Edmund Burke, who has quoted it, in his "Enquiry on the Sublime and Beautiful," as a specimen of gorgeous description, sublime by its prodigal richness of allusion, rather than its strict accuracy and consistency of figure. When Simon died, there were said to be prodigies and omens of future disaster, such as the languishing of the sacrificial flame, and the failing of the shew-bread. But these prognostics were rather a proof of the deep regret of the nation at his removal, than supernatural indications of coming woe.

Simon was succeeded, first by his two brothers, Eleazar and Manasseh, his son being under age; and afterwards by this son, Onias II. The fame and influence of Simon raised to power those branches of his family which were unconnected with the priesthood. Joseph, a grandson of Simon, and nephew of Onias, by his frank and bold bearing, when on an embassy at the court of Ptolemy, acquired the confidence of the monarch and his queen, and obtained from them the farming of the revenue in Palestine. Unfortunately, this circumstance, by raising a family, distinct from the high priesthood, into political influence, laid the foundation for subsequent jealousies and contests, which ended not till they involved the nation in the

\* For further information on this branch of the subject, see the tract on "ALEXANDRIA."

greatest peril. But this result is as yet distant; and we have meanwhile to note the generally mild and indulgent reigns of the three first monarchs of Egypt towards the Jewish province—Ptolemy Lagus or Soter—Ptolemy Philadelphus—Ptolemy Euergetes. The first reigned for a period of 39 years, the second 20 years, the third 23 years, making in all an interval of 82 years, in which Judea enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity. These reigns bring us down to the year 241 B.C.

*The Septuagint Version.*

The translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek, called the Septuagint from the supposed number of the translators, has been already alluded to by anticipation; but its unspeakable importance demands that it should be more distinctly noticed. Its date, as far as, according to the best authorities, this can be indicated, may be fixed about B.C. 277, in the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus. It will be remembered that the design was to lay the Scriptures open, not to the Greeks, but to the Hellenized Jewish population of Alexandria and Cyrene. The exigency sprang from their position. The legend combined from the statements of Aristæas and Epiphanius—of the seventy-two Jewish translators (for *this* is the number given) being lodged in separate cells on the island of Pharos, and preparing each his version of the same part of Scripture, and all of them producing time after time the same rendering word for word, and completing the whole in seventy-two days—is no longer credited by any person. Even the traditions handed down from antiquity differ amongst themselves, and are inconsistent with probability. Scholars have remarked much inequality in parts of the translation, indicating the agency of different hands, some portions being rendered with considerably more precision and elegance than others. It would seem also to have been in parts executed not only by different hands, but at different times. Yet there is good authority for deeming the whole to have been completed within the interval of not many years during the reign of Philadelphus; and, notwithstanding some imperfections, the unrivalled excellence of this version as a whole is admitted by the most competent judges. The value of the Septuagint extended far beyond the immediate design of the devout Jewish scholars who prepared it. They contemplated chiefly

the advantage of the exiles of Egypt; but a higher disposal provided, by their noble achievement, for the integrity of the sacred oracles through after time and for other nations. A translation of an author at any given date is evidence for the state of the original text at that date, and provides an independent security for its incorrupt transmission. Thus the ancient versions of the Old or New Testament, and, in like manner, quotations from either in the early fathers, enable us to collate and rectify any variations that may have crept into the manuscript copies of the original in the course of repeated transcription. For the Old Testament, the translation of the Seventy, prepared two centuries and a half before the Christian era, put it out of the power of later Jewish rabbis to tamper, had they been so disposed, with any passages in the original which contain the more distinct allusions to the character and history of Christ.

#### *Transfer of Palestine to Syria.*

We must now touch, though by briefest allusion, on the political changes which, in the contests of Egypt and Syria, brought Palestine ultimately into subjection to the latter kingdom. The interval of these struggles is from B.C. 241 to B.C. 210. The three first of the Ptolemies, as we have stated, treated the Jews with favour and clemency. Three other sovereigns of Egypt followed, whose reigns were generally more unsettled, and their rule over the Jewish province more rigorous. The administration of the royal revenue in Palestine was managed by Joseph, the grandson of Simon, for twenty-two years, till the invasion of Antiochus the Great, B.C. 207. This monarch of Syria was defeated at Raphia, near Gaza, by Ptolemy Philopater, who, however, subsequently became hostile to the Jewish people in consequence of being repelled by Onias II, son of Simon, when attempting to force his way into the temple. He was succeeded by his son Ptolemy Epiphanes, in whose reign Antiochus made a second attempt to possess Coele-Syria and Judea. He was driven back at first by Scopas, the Egyptian general; but the oppression of the latter, after he had recovered and garrisoned Jerusalem, alienated the Jewish people from the Egyptian dynasty; and Antiochus the Great, in a third invasion, having defeated Scopas near the sources of the Jordan, became master of Judea, and was

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received as a deliverer at Jerusalem. Again, however, Judea, in its hapless position between two powerful monarchies, and not being as of old under the undisturbed rule of one vast empire, passed over to the dominion of Egypt, Antiochus having restored the province to the young sovereign Ptolemy Epiphanes, as a dowry with his daughter Cleopatra. Finally, in the disorder of Egyptian affairs, in the succeeding reign of Ptolemy Philometor, the Syrian monarch again took possession of the province, and from this time (B.C. 210) it became part of the kingdom of Syria.

### JUDEA UNDER THE GREEK MONARCHS OF SYRIA.

The remaining section of our narrative will briefly review the condition of the Jewish state during the next period of about thirty years, under a succession of Syrian monarchs, the persecutions and cruelties of the last of whom brought on the insurrection of the Maccabees, and the war of Jewish independence. This will bring our narrative to the limit which connects it with that which we have given in the tract already referred to, in this series.

Syria was one of the four monarchies into which the empire of Alexander was partitioned after his death and the murder of his family. Under the designation of Syria it presents some obscurity, on account of the vague and fluctuating limit of territory which in different periods has been included under that name. It was anciently synonymous with Assyria, and extended from the Mediterranean eastward beyond the Tigris. At a later period its limit eastward was the Euphrates, and its southern border Arabia. On the north, its boundary was more absolute and determinate, being the range of Mount Taurus and a mountain chain Amanus, which, descending from the Taurus at an angle, approaches the Cilician gulf not far from Issus. By this last range it is divided from Asia Minor. In the time of Seleucus—the general who seized the largest part of Alexander's dominions—the Græco-Syrian kingdom which he founded included the whole of Persia and the eastern provinces conquered by Alexander. Its capital in the west was Antioch, so named after the father of Seleucus. Damascus was its chief city on the south, and on the east it had Babylon, Ecbatana, and Persepolis. To the sovereigns of this kingdom, the acquisition of Coele-Syria, Phenice, and Palestine, was an



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object of constant ambition, and it was effected, as we have seen, about the year B. C. 210, by Antiochus the Great. Antiochus was the grandson of Seleucus Nicator, having succeeded his brother when he was only fifteen years old (B. C. 223). His energy and prowess after he rose to manhood, and the success of his warlike expeditions, made his reign celebrated throughout Europe as well as Asia, and gained for him the title of Great. He conquered the greatest part of Greece, and became the ally of Hannibal in the last struggle of Carthage with Rome; but was ultimately defeated by the Romans, and forced to retire within the Taurus. He was killed in Media in an attempt to plunder the temple of Belus at Susiana, in the year 187 B. C., and left three sons, Seleucus, Antiochus Epiphanes, and Demetrius. The first succeeded him, and his two brothers were kept as hostages at Rome. On the death of Seleucus, Antiochus was released, and mounted the Syrian throne in the year 175 B. C. The persecutions of his reign have been already narrated in the tract entitled "Jewish Sects." He miserably perished, 164 B. C. The interval strictly within the limits of our present section is that which dates from the acquisition of Palestine by Syria to the beginning of the reign of Epiphanes.

We have thrown together these brief particulars respecting the Syrian kingdom, that the position of Palestine in relation to it may be more clearly understood, as well as the distinct period of its subjection to this powerful monarchy previous to the Maccabean war. As, however, during this period the Syrian administration in Palestine, up to the time of Epiphanes, passed without any remarkable occurrence, we shall have no further need to allude to Syrian affairs. A brief and very general review of the condition of the Jewish province will conclude this sketch.

In the last years before the final victory by which Antiochus wrested Palestine from Egypt, Judea had been desolated by wars in which, although foreign armies were mainly engaged, yet the unhappy Jewish population had often to subsist both armies. Their harvests were swept before the invader, their lands wasted, and their cities captured, lost, and re-taken. This period, therefore, was a new phase in their history, and answered mournfully to the prognostics imagined at the death of Simon the Just. The quiet of the Persian reign, the clemency of that of Alexander, the peaceful rule of the first

Ptolemies, were no more; and although Antiochus the Great was welcomed at first as a deliverer from the oppressions of the later sovereigns of Egypt, yet the impositions of Syria, there is reason to believe, were far heavier than the people had already borne, at the same time that their resources were less. The administration of the revenue was no longer in the hands of one of their own countrymen, who, however rigorous, retained an interest in the welfare of his people; but the stranger now exacted, often with menace or the sword, whatever his arbitrary judgment had imposed. We wish not, however, to represent the Syrian administration at this time as the extreme of tyranny, or as bearing that character of hostility to the Jewish people which in the next dark phase of their history it assumed.

Meanwhile, the wealth and influence gained by Joseph, the former administrator of Judea, and transmitted to his family, raised a party, at first a rival, and finally a foe, to the ascendancy of the high priesthood. As we have formerly related, in the high priest resided the chief domestic authority in the state. A succession of these, from Eliashib, had managed the affairs of the nation with patriotism and integrity, the most eminent of whom was Simon, the grandfather of Joseph. The brothers of Simon, Eleazar and Manasseh, and after these Onias, his son, and the uncle of Joseph, followed in the priesthood, and in the civil administration. How far they were assisted at this time by a regularly constituted Sanhedrim is doubtful; but there can be no question that these upright men shunned as much as possible the appearance of arbitrary rule, and that they prudently attached to their counsels the advice and authority of the chiefs of the nation.

The wealth left by Joseph became the cause of bitter and even parricidal contest between his sons. Hyrcanus, the youngest, had seized it, and by his lavish bribes recovered for a time his father's appointment from Egypt, before the invasion of Antiochus; but on his return to Judea, he was attacked by his brothers, two of whom were slain in the struggle by his attendants. He then retreated beyond the Jordan, and collected the revenue in Perea. It was inevitable that the high priest should become involved in this unhappy strife by giving his decision in favour of the one party or the other. Onias III, their kinsman, sided with the elder

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brothers. Hyrcanus came to an untimely end; but part of his wealth being deposited for safety in the temple, Onias was involved in a fresh contest, amid the claims of the surviving sons of Joseph. Thus the dispute went on, till at last one of these sons, Simon, fled to Apollonius, who governed for Seleucus in Coele-Syria, and tempted his cupidity by an account of the vast treasures accumulated in the temple. Antiochus the Great was now dead, and Selencus, his son, needed all he could grasp to meet the exactions of the Romans. Heliodorus, the royal treasurer, arrived at Jerusalem, and filled the people with alarm for the sanctity of their temple, and the safety of its treasures. On entering the court of the temple, he was appalled by the sudden apparition of a rider, on a powerful horse, clad in golden armour, and retreated in dismay. This incident was doubtless something more than an illusion, and less than a miracle, and must have been arranged on purpose to act on the treasurer's fears. The Syrians disbelieved the miracle, and fixed their thoughts steadfastly on the treasure. At the same time, the factions at Jerusalem became more and more inflamed, until at length Onias, the latest of the legitimate priesthood and the last in succession of its upright princes before the Maccabean insurrection, in an ill-fated hour quitted Jerusalem to make his appeal to the second son of Antiochus the Great, Seleucus being now no more. This was Antiochus Epiphanes, who eagerly availed himself of these disputes to gain access to the temple treasures. Detaining the unhappy Onias, who ultimately perished in the grove of Daphne, near Antioch, he first supported the pretensions of his brother Joshua, now calling himself Jason, to the high priesthood, and then those of another apostate priest, who, after the prevailing Greek fashion, named himself Menelaus.

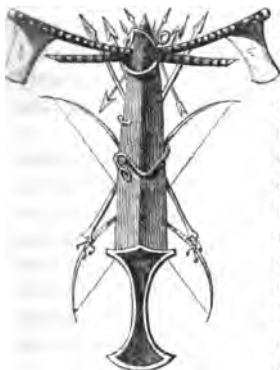
Such are the miserable details of this part of Jewish annals. These contests led at last to invasions on the part of Epiphanes; and his temper becoming infuriated by resistance, he conceived an intense hatred of the Jewish religion, desecrated and defiled the temple, and devoted whole families to martyrdom; until at length the heroic resolve of Mattathias wakened up the prostrate energies of his countrymen to insurrection and to a steady resistance, which ended not till Judea became once more in her history a free and sovereign State.

# SAUL;

OR,

## THE EARLY DAYS OF THE HEBREW MONARCHY.

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THE name of Saul indicates a retrocession in the higher history of Israel. That higher history consisted in the gradual working out of certain divine principles—the realization of certain providential designs; which, having their root and their germ in the theocracy, or the spiritual supremacy of Jehovah over the Hebrew people, had their full development and embodiment in the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. The theocracy, as recognised and proclaimed by Moses, com-

prised three elements:—firstly, the prophetic; secondly, the sacerdotal; and, thirdly, the popular. The prophetic and the sacerdotal elements represented the divine authority, which through their means sought to work on the people with a view to the fulfilment of the will of God in and by them. The two former elements were instrumental; the third was final. Neither prophets nor priests existed for themselves, but solely as channels of the divine goodness to Israel. This thought, however, was too high to be apprehended at the early period of which we write. The pure disinterestedness of Moses found no imitator. Aaron's descendants became self-seeking. The people preferred the lower good of sense to the higher, the only true good—namely, obedience to the will of God. The lowering of the prophetic element, and the degradation of the sacerdotal, prepared the way for the enslavement of the people to a visible and worldly dominion. The enslavement began with the anointing of Saul.

The setting of a human king over Israel looked like a

renunciation of the theocracy. What was allegiance to Saul but treason to Jehovah? So marked a departure from the Mosaic constitution could not have been easily introduced. In truth, it was withstood alike by the priesthood and by the prophetic influence. The resistance of the priesthood, however, was not considerable. Passively conservative, rather than energetically moulding and firmly directing, the priesthood contented itself with the course of events, if only that course did not run counter to its forms, usages, and interests. Ceremonialism has ever a tendency to crystallise into self-regardingness. Accordingly, the hierarchy of Israel, like the hierarchy of Rome, employed their position in order to gratify the lower appetites, and so fell into disrespect among the people.

While the power of the priesthood thus sank below its mission, the power of the prophets, though less lofty than aforetime, was too lofty for the people. The Hebrew prophet, as the recipient of the Divine Spirit, was the Voice of God spoken in the midst of Israel. Inspired by the Source of law and the Author of truth, he recognised, felt, and taught the grand and everlasting verities of religion, of which the theocracy was at once the centre and the circumference. Hence, the one burthen of his soul was obedience to God, the sole King and Governor, as of heaven, so of earth. But obedience to God was obedience to an invisible monarch. Hard was such obedience to the Israelites of the days of Samuel. Had they not been sunk in the worship of visible things? for what else is idolatry? Were not the greater number of them still slaves to the senses? How could they obey conscience, God's viceroy in the human soul? How could they entrust themselves in war to the leadings of a celestial hand and the shelter of an unseen shield? The difficulty may be more easily understood if the reader is reminded that the more civilised nations on the globe are still almost exclusively under the sway of earthly monarchs, and that none but the most saintly of men acknowledge in life, as well as thought and emotion, the real sovereignty of God. The worship of the outward is even now all but universal. Not Jehovah, but some fellow man, we acknowledge as our lord; and only when we have paid due homage to the visible, do we bow the knee of our inmost soul to the invisible. Not without

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some extenuation, then, was the inaptitude of Israel, in the days of the last judge, to the prophetic influence. That influence could not be duly recognised and felt, unless it came down from its height, and taking a human form, dwelt as a man among men. The theocracy must pass into a monarchy to gain a footing on earth. Only through the heterogeneous influences of a visible sovereignty could the invisible sovereignty build its palace and set up its throne.

Moreover, the third element of the Mosaic constitution had proved insufficient for its own wants. Of all social trials, self-government is the severest. Witness the experiment now making in the United States of America. Yet this was the enterprise which Moses consigned to the hands of Joshua and his conquering hosts. The failure of the enterprise has been tacitly recorded in preceding pages. During a trial which extended through centuries, Israel proved unequal to the task of self-government. Its republicanism was ever relapsing into anarchy. Often had it been snatched from the gulf by the strong hand of some judge, or the great soul of some prophet; and, doubtless, the consequent perils, deliverances, and rejoicings conduced to manliness of character. Yet, was Israel a state? was there a Hebrew commonwealth? If particular tribes were from time to time powerful, the ascendancy was partial and of short duration. The particles of the Hebrew life lay scattered like seeds over the soil; to a small extent only had they struck root therein, and little likely were they to grow up into a rich and plenteous harvest. Indeed, the feeling of nationality had been to some extent abated; for those who, while under the hand of Moses or Joshua, had been made vividly conscious of their common Hebrew descent, now scarcely knew each other as brothers, when they were separated one from another, not only by the Jordan and its tributaries, and by mountains and hills running in all parts of the land, but also by what were accounted diverse and even conflicting interests.

These general considerations, all tending to encourage a demand for some human monarch, were brought home to the hearts of the nation with special force by circumstances peculiar to the days of Samuel. The power of self-government might then be considered to have had a fair trial. The gross misconduct of the sons of Eli had brought the priesthood into

disrepute. True, Samuel had almost shown himself a second Moses, so admirably had he executed the united offices of judge and prophet; yet even he was not wholly free from the suspicion of trenching on the prerogatives of the priesthood;\* and on his death, what had Israel to expect? Samuel had sons; could the nation look to them? Alas! they dishonoured their father's grey hairs, disgraced themselves and the judicial office to which they had been promoted, and, instead of being a stay and a glory to Israel, were a trouble and an offence.† Their misdemeanours seem to have been the immediate occasion of the demand made by the Israelites for a fundamental change in their constitution. "Behold," they said to Samuel, "thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king, to judge us like all the nations." "Like all the nations"—there was the mistake; they looked to men rather than to God; they were dazzled by the tinsel of thrones and the parade of armies, instead of reposing on God's all-sufficiency in tranquil and pleased content. But let us not judge them severely, remembering how we ourselves are attracted by the same illusions. The Israelites of the days of the last judge are not the only race of men who were blind to their high privileges; and if Christians are still so foolish as to compare themselves with themselves, rather than look to Christ, their Divine Head, a rude and unsettled age may be pardoned if they took what seemed to them the shortest and most effectual way to national security and good government, although the path chosen is now known to have led far away, as from God, so from duty, safety, and peace.

In their foreign relations, however, the Hebrews had cause of anxiety and distrust. From the two great monarchies of the world, they had indeed little to fear. Egypt appears to have been tributary to Assyria, and Assyria herself had sunk into the effeminating luxury of Asiatic rule. Yet did the power of the latter remain formidable; and, if only to maintain her sway over Egypt, she appears from time to time to have instigated the immediate neighbours of Israel to invade its territories. Certainly, a hostile movement of the Ammonites in Perea brought the transjordanic tribes into great peril, and set in disturbance the whole of the western.‡ While danger thus impended from the north-east, the south-

\* 1 Sam. vii. 9.

† 1 Sam. viii. 1, seq.

‡ 1 Sam. xi

western districts of Palestine were infested by hordes of powerful and inveterate foes. The Philistines, though repeatedly repulsed, were ever ready to resume the offensive. Constantly reinforcing their ranks, as it would appear, from the kindred populations of the islands of the Mediterranean, they made almost ceaseless war on the Hebrews, as if determined to dispute with them the possession of Palestine, and to drive them as intruders back across the Jordan into the deserts whence they came. An assailant so resolute, so powerful, so active, and so near, was indeed to be feared. Safety could be secured only by that combined action of all Israel, which could not arise except under one universally recognised ruler. Noble deeds had, it is true, been wrought by the heroism and prowess of individuals. But great and precious as were the deliverances thus achieved, the danger still continued, while Israel was still disunited. Hence arose the cry which came from the people as from the lips of one man—"We will have a king over us."\*

The transition from a republican to a monarchical form of government is, in our times, something both very considerable and very difficult. Those who would understand the course of events recorded in Scripture must here, as on other occasions, guard against the misguidance of false analogies, especially that which consists in transferring modern instances to ancient manners. The term *melek*, "king," meant, in the mouths of the importunate Israelites, something very different from what the word king signifies now. At that time, and in that country, every chief of a tribe or a clan bore the title; and from the offices assigned by implication to the king the Israelites demanded, it is clear that they expected little, if any thing, more than a judge in peace and a leader in war.† Now these functions had been already discharged by several of the Shophets (judges) with great efficiency. Hence it seems probable that the real point at issue was a community of counsel and action. The demand, in truth, was a demand for unity rather than sovereignty. And even the required unity was left without the guarantee of hereditaryness—an element now considered an essential component of kingship. These statements and implications tending to show how comparatively slight was the change, and so to explain the facility with

\* 1 Sam. viii. 19.

† 1 Sam. viii. 5; viii. 19, seq.



which it was effected, will find illustrations and confirmations in the narratives which are about to be given.

The required change, however, was a novelty. It was, moreover, a novelty full of peril. To employ the language of modern times, the change was *unconstitutional*. A king was not something that grew naturally out of the components of the Mosaic polity. It was a foreign element introduced. Who could promise that the foreign element would readily amalgamate with existing agencies? Might it not corrupt the priesthood, suppress prophecy, and enslave the people? Both civil and religious liberty seemed to be threatened. A barrier was raised against the free development of the national destinies. Might not Israel be reduced to a level with the Pagan monarchies around? Nay, might she not forfeit the favour of Jehovah? For did not the appointment of a king amount to treason against God? Any way, the balance of the national powers was in imminent peril. Therefore, Samuel wisely determined to make the incoming element as inconsiderable as possible. If the people were set on having a king, let the king at any rate possess little power for harm. This was the rule and guide of Samuel's conduct. Here is the key to his whole course of action relative to Saul. Yet while resolved to limit the power of the king, and while taking the steps necessary for the object, Samuel acted throughout in an open, frank, and honourable manner. Nor let the principle now enunciated be misinterpreted, so as to throw a suspicion on Samuel's disinterestedness. Not for personal ends, but for the glory of God and the good of the nation, did he labour; and in taking such precautions as he could to prevent regal ascendancy from disturbing the equipoise of the commonwealth, he simply performed an imperative duty by practically preferring God to man—the higher sovereignty to the lower—and by guarding the spiritual influences of which he himself was the organ and representative against the encroachments of sense. It is to be carefully observed that Samuel is represented in Scripture as acting in the matter under the Divine guidance. In himself averse to the demand of the people, he was induced to yield by an express instruction from God. He was guided by a wisdom higher than his own. The All-Wise saw that only through an earthly sovereignty could his own sovereignty be effectually secured in Israel, and consequently

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he directed his servant, the prophet Samuel, to listen to the popular importunities.

### CHOICE OF A KING.

Going forth from his secret conference with God, Samuel seems to have calmly looked around him, in order to discover the person most fitted for the office. Two qualities were requisite; first, such personal and social advantages as would effectually recommend the new king to what may be termed a loose aggregate of petty republics; and, second, the absence of the kind and degree of power that would be formidable to integral constituents of the Israelite polity. The requisites seemed to exist in Saul. He was a young man, and therefore likely to lend a favourable ear to the words of the aged Samuel, and to accommodate himself to the other social powers with which he was about to come in contact. He was a person of fine stature and imposing mien, and so would captivate the hearts of rude natures, which are ever alive to physical beauty. He came of a good family, and so would command general respect. Moreover, he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. This tribe was small, and in consequence could excite little fear of proving dangerous, should it even give a king to Israel. The tribe was also the centre of the highest social influences of the day. This fact, which clearly results from the statements and implications of the sacred narrative, has not received from historians the attention it deserves, though more than any other it aids us to understand why the family of Kish should have been preferred to all the other houses of Israel. Already, indeed, did Benjamin possess an ascendancy of the best and most lasting nature. The tribe stood before others in power, because it was superior in culture. Holding this position, it lent a *prestige* to its members individually, and Saul, as the noble scion of a worthy Benjaminite family, possessed a very high claim to the esteem of his countrymen.

### SAUL ANOINTED TO BE KING.

What men call an accident, but in reality a divine ordination, brought Saul into personal contact with Samuel. It is early morning. The brilliant rays of the sun, darting from the mountains of Moab, cross the middle of Palestine, which they fill with a glorious lustre, and pass away westward to

bathe themselves in the blue waters of the Mediterranean. On their passage, they fall on the city of Ramah, and rouse its population into unwonted activity, for the great prophet has come, and to-day is a high festival, which he is to honour with his presence. While its busy crowds make ready the sacrifices, young maidens seize their water-jars and hasten out of the city to draw water, gleefully singing as they go. As they come near the well, they see approaching them two persons, who fix their attention; one by his extraordinary beauty, and both by their worn and weary appearance.

"Is the seer here?" asked that one of the strangers who was obviously the superior.

"Yes," was the reply; "hasten into the city: there is a sacrifice to-day: you will meet with him as you go, for he is about to ascend to the high place."

The travellers quicken their steps. Now it had come to pass that the prophet had the night before given entertainment to some thirty friends, whom he wished to consult touching the right person to be anointed as king. The conference directed his mind to Saul, as being not only eligible in himself, but indicated by a widely-spread sense of his fitness.\* The national preference received the Divine sanction. Already had Jehovah made his servant familiar with the qualities and features of the intended monarch. When, then, Saul came within sight of Samuel, as he was proceeding to the public solemnities, God's voice in the soul of the latter said, "Behold the man whom I spake to thee of; this same shall reign over my people."

While the mind of Samuel was thus meditating on a lofty topic, Saul sorrowed for a heavy loss, after which he had been searching in vain. No sooner, therefore, was he near the prophet, then tendering the last piece of silver he had left as a means of conciliation, "Tell me, I pray," he said, "where my father's asses are, for we cannot find them."

The Seer replied: "Go up before me unto the high place: for ye shall eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let thee depart, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart; and as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them, for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? is it not on thee and on thy father's house?"

\* 1 Sam. ix. 20.

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Saul's modesty knew not what to make of the great prophet's words. Nugatory, however, was his reluctance. He was conducted by the great man to his abode, introduced into the best apartment, placed in the seat of honour, and supplied with viands provided expressly for his entertainment. That night was a solemn time for the young Hebrew. After the banquet was ended, and the company dispersed, Samuel took him to the flat roof of his dwelling, and there communed with him under the open sky and as in the presence of God.

With the dawn of the next day the conference was resumed in the same spot. The words that passed are not recorded, but, doubtless, they bore directly on the one point that absorbed the prophet's soul. Not easy was his task. He had to ascertain, on his own knowledge, that Saul possessed the requisite qualifications. When he had satisfied himself, he had to make Saul believe that he was called to the throne. Never till that night had the idea entered the young man's mind, nor could anything but the reverend authority of the prophet have induced him to entertain it for a moment. And even now it seemed absurd and improbable that the statement of the prophet should be actually true. It conflicted with the whole tenor of his education. While Saul thus doubted and feared, Samuel devised measures to confirm his mind and lead him to look on himself as divinely set apart for the kingly office. Accordingly, when Samuel, with oriental courtesy, accompanied his parting guest, he, on arriving at an unfrequented spot, directed Saul to bid his servant pass on, and then proceeded to anoint the monarch-elect with that sacred oil which the latter knew to be reserved for the inauguration of the highest officers of state. Trembling with an awful and mysterious joy, as the sacred drops ran down his head, and as he received the consecrating kiss from Samuel's lips, he faintly but emphatically asked, "Why is this?" Then came the distinct reply, "Is it not because Jehovah hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?"

That all misgiving might be removed from Saul's mind, and that he might be built up in the fullest confidence of the reality of the Divine call he had received, the prophet of his own accord foretold several events which would happen to him as he returned home to Gibeah. The events occurred, and the monarch-elect believed Jehovah and his prophet. Filled with

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this fresh and living faith, Saul, on beholding a company of prophets coming down from the high place near his own city, was seized by the same spirit by which they prophesied in praising God, and he too began to utter his glad and reverent inspirations in devout and jubilant song. Joining the prophetic choir, he approached his father's abode, when, as he passed along, he drew upon himself every eye, and filled with wonder every mind, and all the neighbours said to each other, "What is this that is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?" Then answered this man and that, "If his father's son is a prophet, who not?" The general surprise spread to the members of Kish's family. His uncle especially wished to penetrate the mystery. But the time for publicity had not yet come: premature disclosures might have subverted the prophet's design.\*

### SAUL IS ELECTED KING.

Saul had been solemnly appointed to the regal dignity by the representative of Jehovah. He was, accordingly, God's anointed; he was king over Israel. The choice had been made with such care and circumspection, as to justify the hope that he whom God had designated and Samuel anointed, the people would choose. The popular voice, however, was indispensable, especially since Israel was a commonwealth, and the desire for a king originated with the people themselves. Accordingly, in due time, the prophet convened an assembly of the nation, at Mizpeh, which, as a central position, had long been the ordinary place for national gatherings,† and which, as lying in the territory of Benjamin, might afford support to the object for which the convention was brought together. True to the relation which he held between Jehovah and his apostate children, Samuel first reproached the Israelites with their folly and guilt in preferring a human monarch to the Almighty. Had they not found in God a very present help in every time of need? Had they not been delivered from Egyptian bondage by his strong arm? Had they not been preserved during the perils of forty years in the wilderness? Had they not been safely conducted into the land of promise through hostile kingdoms and embattled hosts?

\* 1 Sam. ix. x. 1—16.

† Judges xx. 1; xxi. 1; 1 Sam. vii. 5; x. 17.

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Surely the arm that had protected and guided their fathers was sufficient for themselves. No? Then they rejected God. Nevertheless, God was too merciful to reject them. If a king they would have, then let them take Jehovah into their councils, and make a wise choice. If God still remained their friend, they might yet hope for prosperity.

Under arrangements instituted by Samuel, the tribes went up to consult the Divine will through the sacred Urim and Thummim, and so made the priesthood a party to the grand act of national selection. Imposing was the sight when all the members of the sacerdotal order, attired in their robes of ceremony, gathered around their head, who stood in their midst in all the pomp and solemnity of his sacred office. The hierarchical ranks stood on a hill side, while the tribes, represented by their several chiefs, passed before them. On they went, tribe after tribe, until Benjamin came opposite the high priest, who thereupon forthwith raised his hand to heaven to signify the object of the Divine appointment. Wonder rushed through the hosts of Israel. The tribe of Benjamin was God's choice; but of its numerous families, which had the preference? The families passed before the pontiff, when that of Matri was taken. But in that family what individual house? The house of Kish. Finally, out of the members of that house, Saul was selected. The name, when announced by the high priest, ran echoing through the ranks. But where is he? The question was asked on all sides. No, he had not canvassed for the honour, consecrated though he had been by the holy oil. Rather, he shrank from the responsibility; and, fearing he should be chosen, had hidden himself among the luggage of the thousands who had travelled to the convention from distant parts. The reverberations of the shouting tribes brought his own name to his ear. Saul, however, only the more carefully concealed his person. Thousands were soon in search of him. But the search proved fruitless. It became necessary, therefore, to consult the oracle. Then was he discovered and brought forth: "And when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders; and Samuel said, See ye whom the Lord hath chosen; there is none like him among you all. And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king!"

The individual who was to fill the newly-created office being

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found, Samuel's next duty was to lay down the principles by which his conduct should be directed. With special care and foresight, and with a due regard to all the constituents of social power, the prophet in a few bold outlines drew up a code for the future government of the nation. The constitution was accepted and ratified by the people. Thus terminated the solemn transaction, and the thousands and tens of thousands of Israel retired to their homes. A great national crisis had, by Divine guidance, come to a peaceful and satisfactory settlement.

The natural conclusion of these transactions would have been the enthronement of the elected monarch. There appears, however, to have been reasons for delay. The enthusiasm of the hour may have rapidly grown cold. Jealousies may have broken out among the tribes. Why should Benjamin be preferred? Its people were too few and too refined for the rough and arduous work for which a king was needed. "How shall this man save us?" asked many whose influence was none the less because they were equally unscrupulous and active in their opposition. Men of bad characters, but affecting zeal for the public good, they openly avowed their contempt for Saul, and expressly refused to own their allegiance to him. It is not impossible that the discontent spread so far that Samuel felt it necessary to take special steps to induce the excited population of the land quietly to resume their usual occupations.\* Certainly, a body-guard, consisting of religiously disposed Israelites, was assigned to the new sovereign, and he was advised to return home and remain for a time there in peaceful expectation that Jehovah would make his duty clear and his path plain.

### SAUL ASSUMES THE SCEPTRE.

The solution of the difficulty soon came. The transjordanic tribes fell into great peril. Weakened, probably, by their exposure to the wild nomads of the desert, and the intrigues of Nineveh, they proved unable to withstand attacks made upon them by the Ammonite king Nahash. Compelled to give ground, they at last concentrated their forces in Jabesh-Gilead, opposite Bethshean, in the tribe of Issachar. The city was reduced to such extremities as to offer to capitulate. The

\* 1 Sam. x. 27.

pagan monarch; aware of his power, displayed arrogance and ferocity blended with cunning. On one condition he would spare the lives of the Hebrews—"that I may thrust out all your right eyes, and lay it for a reproach on all Israel."\* A reproach, indeed, would such a maiming have been, for then the Hebrew race would, without a resisting blow, have allowed the surviving warriors of at least one tribe to have been incapacitated for defence or offence; for what service could be rendered in battle by men who, while their left eye was darkened by their shields, had not their right to guide their right arm in its movements? Yet the disgrace and the suffering must be endured unless aid could be procured from the other side of the river.

A truce for seven days was demanded by the Hebrews and granted by the Ammonites, who, though triumphant, knew what Hebrew valour was too well to drive it to desperation needlessly. Messengers were sent across the Jordan, bearing the dismal news. With all speed they traversed the land. Arriving at Gibeah, they told their tale. The people were smitten with grief. A universal wail arose. "And behold Saul came after the herd out of the field; and Saul said, What aileth the people that they weep? And they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Saul when he heard these tidings, and his anger was kindled greatly; and he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them throughout all the coasts of Israel by the hands of the messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen. And the fear of the Lord fell upon the people, and they came out with one consent."†

Forthwith, a place of rendezvous was appointed. It was Bezek, on the north-east of Mount Ebal, lying on the west of the Jordan, at no great distance from Jabesh-Gilead. Thither the Hebrews flocked from all quarters. As the crisis admitted of no delay, the inhabitants of what was afterwards called Israel, in contrast with Judah, being nearer the scene of danger, naturally contributed the chief forces of the army. With 300,000 of these, and 30,000 from the more southern districts, Saul crossed the Jordan, and having encouraged the besieged by a secret message promising immediate relief, he

\* 1 Sam. xl. 2.

† 1 Sam. xi. 1-7.



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fell on the Ammonites just before the morning dawn, and taking them by surprise, obtained a signal victory, not ceasing from the slaughter till compelled by the overpowering heat of the day. The assailants were scattered like chaff before the wind. The beleaguered city was relieved, and once more Israel breathed in safety.

This seasonable deliverance caused universal exultation. A horrible evil and foul dishonour had been averted. The service had been rendered by one who might now have reigned in Israel, and prevented the danger he had thus warded off. And why did he not hold the sceptre? Evil-minded men of republican principles had withstood the wishes of the nation. A cry arose for their blood. "Not a man shall be put to death," was the noble reply of the now triumphant king. In a religious enthusiasm equally laudable, Saul, taking no credit to himself, ascribed the victory to God, and said, "The Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel." The advantage naturally called forth one feeling of unqualified exultation. Under its warm and favourable breezes it was resolved to complete the arrangements for a regal government. Choosing for the solemnities Gilgal, in the vale of the Jordan, consecrated by proud historic memories and venerable religious associations, Saul and all the chief men of the tribes went thither; and there they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal, and there they sacrificed sacrifices of peace-offerings before the Lord; and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.\*

### SAMUEL'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION, AND HIS RETIREMENT FROM PUBLIC LIFE.

Among the events of that memorable day, not the least important was a speech delivered by Samuel. Aware that a great revolution was now accomplished, the prophet patriotically resolved to do what he could to prevent the evils which he could not but apprehend. Would the change prove beneficial? Only on one condition: the sovereignty of Jehovah, though disowned relatively to an outer form, must still be honoured in substance. If God's will was still supreme in Israel, all would be well; otherwise, evil, disaster, perhaps ruin, would come. These undoubted verities he would pub-

\* 1 Sam. xii. 19-15.

holy declare, and he would declare them now, in this jubilant hour; it might be that national gratitude would secure national obedience. With these views, the aged prophet, his long gray hours streaming to the breeze, spoke to the assembled myriads—first of his own history—what he had done for Israel, in what spirit and to what results: could any one charge him with malversation? whom had he injured? from whom had he taken a bribe? Then there arose, as from the voice of one man, the words, “Thou hast not defrauded us nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken aught of any man’s hand.” “Then,” continued the prophet, “with Jehovah as a witness between us, I call on you to review the past. You were slaves in Egypt; who redeemed you? who brought you into this luxuriant land? Here in the midst of plenty you disobeyed; your disobedience entailed punishment; but did Jehovah abandon you? The moment you repented, he sent you deliverance. Why need I mention Jerubbaal, and Jephthah? And what am I but God’s messenger to you? And what is the one great lesson of all your past history? Is it not that those who honour God, God will honour? Now, then, behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired; and behold the Lord hath set a king over you; if ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you be under the protection of God; \* but if ye will not obey the voice of the Lord, then shall the hand of the Lord be against you, as it was against your fathers.”

The speaker paused. Then throwing himself into the attitude of one listening for something in the distance, he announced a thunderstorm as an attestation of his words given by Jehovah. It was barley harvest, and in early spring thunder is infrequent in Palestine. The people were looking half incredulous, when of a sudden the bolts flew, and the lightnings darted, and the rain poured around them, smiting every one with alarm, and making the doubters quake with

\* Literally, “shall be after,” as in the margin; that is, be as prosperous and as happy as are the subjects who are near the person of a sovereign, who form his *suite*, or “following,” and so enjoy his protection and favour. The authorised version, in making the apodosis of the sentence merely repeat the substance of the protasis, gives no sense.

fear. Beholding the impression from the height he occupied, the prophet reassured the terrified multitudes. The witness had been borne. Quite sure might they now be that his words were God's words. Hopeful himself for the future, he bade them, too, be hopeful. All would be well if only they were faithful to Him who in his grace had chosen them to be his own people; and though they had to pass through a severe trial in their new form of government, yet could they not forfeit God's favour, unless by deliberate and wilful sin, while on his part he would never omit the duty of offering up prayers and supplications on their behalf.

Saul being thus formally installed in the seat of power, Samuel's office as judge over Israel came to an end. His spiritual functions, however, depended on no earthly contingencies. Still God's prophet in Israel, he was charged with solemn and imperative duties. As such, he was bound to watch carefully and jealously for the general weal. The good of the throne, as well as the good of the priesthood and the good of the people, were objects of his care; nor less did it lie upon him to see that the prerogatives of the prophets in no way suffered injury in his hands. Representing the highest culture, embodying the highest law, and wielding the highest sanctions in the monarchy, Samuel not only had the right, but was under the obligation, to regulate and control the workings of the whole machine of government, renewing what was decayed, strengthening what was weak, subduing what was too strong, removing what stood in the way, and generally adjusting and harmonizing all. A noble function was that of the Hebrew prophets, a function no less rare than noble, a function so rare as to be found in no other nation, ancient or modern, and that because never has there been a class of civil and religious functionaries that stood so near God as did these "holy men of old."

The age of Saul is remarkable in the history of Israel by giving birth to two institutions. Then first did the prophets appear as the members of a class. Then first did God's chosen people make to themselves a king. Two great changes were these. Two marked phases are they in the growth and development of the nation. Antagonistic in their origin and their idea the one to the other, they worked for centuries in opposition. Yet did they work to such results that eventually

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they found their synthesis in Christ, who, besides being the prophet and the king, was also the priest, and who while teaching, reconciling, and governing the people, embodied in his spiritual perfections and universal relations all the great powers of the Hebrew church and state, in fullest harmony and utmost effect.

We have spoken of Saul as young, and young he was as compared with Samuel; but when he ascended the throne he must have been in the flower of his age, for at the commencement of his reign he had a son named Jonathan, already capable of undertaking military expeditions.\* The necessity of such efforts was great, and the impulse given to the nation by the defeat of the Ammonites afforded an opportunity which a wise ruler would by no means lose. The Philistines, though defeated by Samuel at Mizpeh,† never desisted from hostilities, and toward the end of the prophet's life must have gained considerable advantages. By degrees they intruded into the Israelite territory, and established strong outposts even in the centre of the land. Obviously they were preparing to strike a blow at the heart of the nation.‡ Indeed, in the immediate vicinity of their military stations, the Hebrews were held in such subjection, that they were not allowed to forge even implements of agriculture. Obligated to depend on the Philistines for the sharpening of their ploughshares and goads, the Hebrews were little likely to be well furnished with weapons of war. We may, in truth, learn from the positions

\* The chronology is by no means clear. Our English Bibles give in 1 Sam. xiii. 1, "Saul reigned one year"—a rendering which can be safely pronounced incorrect. The original may be translated, "Saul on becoming king was the son of year." The cipher is thought to have dropped out of the text, so that we ought to give the matter thus, "Saul, etc., was the son of years," for in Hebrew, the singular (year) is put instead of the plural after nouns of number beyond ten. The Hexapla supplies 30. Saul must have been older, else Jonathan could not have been as he appears in the sacred text. The Hebrew closely rendered runs thus, "Son of a year Saul in his reigning;" and seems to indicate that Saul had been for a year king *de jure* before he became king *de facto*; in other words, that a year had elapsed between his being anointed, or between his being chosen, and his accession. The second part of the verse lends itself to this interpretation; "and two years reigned he over Israel when," etc., making a distinction between his being king and his actually reigning over Israel. Authorities are not quite of one mind as to the date of Saul's accession. The greater number place it in the year 1055 before Christ. Ewald prefers 1085; Winer, 1075; Von Gumpach, 1036; Kruger, 1060; the margin of the authorised Version, 1093.

+ 1 Sam. vii. 13.

‡ 1 Sam. x. 5; xiii. 3, 5, 19—23.

severally occupied by the combatants in the campaign that ensued on Saul's accession, that Israel had been driven out of Judah and Benjamin, and found it convenient to seek a rallying-point in the deep plains of the Jordan vales, difficult of access and easy to defend. This view of the relative forces of the Hebrews and the Philistines serves to illustrate the necessity there was for combined and energetic action, to excuse the demand for an earthly sovereign, and to show how arduous was the task which devolved on Saul.

Two years the new monarch seem to have spent in comparative inaction. The delay must have been occasioned by some strong necessity. Saul probably felt that a premature blow would be hazardous, and might be fatal. After due deliberation, and after such preparations as he was able to make, he began to take steps for the protection of his people. Three thousand men constituted the whole of his disposable force. With two thousand of these he himself occupied Michmash, in the north-west of Benjamin; the other thousand he put under Jonathan, who placed himself at Gibeah, in the south-west of Benjamin. Thus the post of danger was allotted to the son, while the father commanded the reserve. It was a bold deed for Jonathan to take up a position in face of the enemy. Only by the utmost daring could deliverance be achieved. Falling on the Philistines, the young soldier inflicted on them severe punishment. The report of the victory ran through Philistia and Palestine. Seizing the opportunity, Saul sent out trumpeters into different parts, who proclaimed, "Let the Hebrews hear the glad news." Needful step, for the Hebrews stank in the nostrils of their assailants!

Their reverse provoked the Philistines, who now "gathered themselves together to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people as the sand which is on the sea shore for multitude."\* Saul judged it prudent to retire from Michmash, which was occupied by the foe. Their advance struck terror into the Hebrews. A universal flight ensued. Thousands and tens of thousands hurried across the highlands, and sought refuge in the valley of the Jordan, and many did not consider themselves in safety until they had put the river between themselves and the advancing

\* 1 Sam. xiii. 5.

nemy. In order to allay their fear and rally his flying subjects, Saul fixed his head-quarters at Gilgal, and so interposed himself between the fugitives and the country beyond the river. There he gathered around him a considerable number of panic-stricken men.\* With such, what service could he perform? Before anything could be undertaken, it was necessary to restore their spirits. One means only could effect the object. There must be a religious solemnity. Saul and Samuel were in correspondence touching these emergencies, and the prophet had appointed a day when he would be with the king, that a sacrifice might be offered to God with all possible impressiveness. Seven days did Saul wait—days passed in anxiety, hope, fear, to end almost in despair. He waited, yet Samuel came not. At length he may have concluded that Samuel could not come, the roads being in the hands of the Philistines. Apprehending an attack, which, with his troops thus disheartened, must have proved fatal, the monarch became his own priest and offered a burnt offering. The embers were scarcely extinct when Samuel was announced. Saul went forth to pay him his respects. "What hast thou done?" asked the indignant prophet, alarmed that his fear lest the king should trespass on the priestly functions had thus soon been realised. "I expected the Philistines," was the reply: "You came not as you promised. I therefore forced myself, and offered a burnt offering." "Foolish man," rejoined Samuel, "you have disobeyed God, and so forfeited your crown."

Having expressed his stern disapprobation of Saul's misdeed, and shown the confidence of his own soul in Israel's destiny, by declaring that another was appointed to take the sceptre, Samuel left the agitated camp, and went back to the uplands and tarried at Gibeah, Saul's own city. The affrighted monarch—monarch now only in name—mustered his forces, and found that six hundred men were all he had been able to rally around his standard.

The natural course of events compels us to assume that at Gibeah Samuel took effectual steps to arrest the prevalent disorder, and to cool the ardour of the Philistines. Certainly, the battle-ground is soon transferred from the vale of the

\* 1 Sam. xiii. 4—7; the Hebrew is very expressive: "All the people trembled after him." See the margin.

Jordan to the central hills of the land. Gibeah is held by the Israelites, Michmash by the Philistines. The position was such that the former were cut off from the base of their operations. Aware of the disadvantage, the Philistines sent out three bands in order to secure their safety, little expecting the blow that impended. The blow came from the valorous arm of Jonathan, who, inspired by patriotic heroism, performed one of those deeds of hardihood which are to be found only in the earlier ages, and which give so romantic a charm to ancient history.

Michmash, the Philistine post, stands on an elevation near the western extremity of a deep and wide ravine, which runs down into the vale of the Jordan. The spot commanded the heart of the land, and gave easy access to Gilgal and the fords of the Jordan. So long as it remained in the hands of the foe, Israel was all but lost. The Philistines had fortified the summit of the hill, and there, as from an impregnable stronghold, defied and threatened the Israelites. That summit on the north was faced by a corresponding height on the south. The southern hill was seized by Jonathan with a small force. Full of heroic ardour, he in open day went forth, and, accompanied only by his armour-bearer, challenged the whole garrison. Instead of going down to meet and destroy the puny foe, they tauntingly bade him come up. This was the assurance Jonathan hoped for. Knowing by this token that they would rather decline the conflict, and full of faith that Jehovah could save as well by few as by many, he climbed up the face of the northern hill, and falling on the Philistines with all his youthful impetuosity, he overthrew some twenty men, whom he left for his armour-bearer to slay, while he himself pressed forward to reap down others.

Meanwhile, the Hebrew camp at Gibeah became aware of the sudden movement at Michmash. "Who are lacking?" asked Saul. The little band was soon numbered; and Jonathan and his armour-bearer were missing. Resolving to hurry to the fight, Saul first placed the sacred ark in safety, and then hurried over to Michmash. Soon the conflict spread on every hand. The news that the Philistines were flying brought forth many Hebrews, who had hid themselves in dens and caves. Of special importance was it that renegade Israelites, who served in the Philistine army, now joined their

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victorious countrymen. Soon the fate of the day was decided. The Philistines were stricken down on all sides. On all sides they fled, and their flight became a rout. "So Jehovah saved Israel that day."

The universal joy was damped by a sad event. Heated by the hope of a complete victory, Saul had unwisely given as his watchword, "Cursed be he that eateth food till evening, that I may be avenged on my enemies." His noble son, now carrying everything before him, came with his band into a wood where was much wild honey. Famished and worn down, Jonathan took and ate a small portion as he passed on in pursuit of the enemy. Guiltless was he, for he knew nothing of his father's adjuration. Saul was informed of what Jonathan had done, and with unrelenting pity condemned him to death, his own son though he was. The sentence struck the people with horror. "He shall not die," was heard on all hands; "Jonathan, the valiant, to whom the Lord has given the victory, shall not die." The people prevailed.\*

This signal achievement restored the fortunes of Israel. The Philistines withdrew within their own territories—defeated, however, rather than overcome. Profiting by the triumph, Saul fell on the enemies of Israel in every quarter. Having restored safety on the west of the Jordan, he made a campaign on the east, the whole of which he forced into obedience, from Moab in the south to Zobah in the north.

### SAUL FORFEITS HIS CROWN.

One powerful foe still remained. While Amalek was unsubdued, the southern boundary was insecure. Amalek was an old enemy. In the wilderness he had withstood Israel, and almost changed the current of its history. The bitterness of his hatred was not mitigated. Therefore must he be cut off, root and branch. Samuel, assured that Israel could not be safe, nor its religion be pure, so long as Amalek hung upon its skirts, spoke to the king in virtue of his prophetic authority, and said, "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." †

Saul made his preparations, marched to the south, fell on the Amalekites, and destroyed the bulk, both men and beast; but

\* 1 Sam. xiv.

† 1 Sam. xv, 1, seq.



he spared Agag the king, and the best of the cattle. Returning in triumph, he was overtaken by Samuel, who had received intelligence of what had taken place, and who, bitterly grieving at Saul's short-coming, was sent by Jehovah to reprove the king and pronounce his loss of the crown. The two once more met at Gilgal. When he saw the prophet, the king pretended to have fulfilled the Divine commands. But Samuel was not to be deceived. "What meaneth, then, this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Ready with a falsehood, Saul replied that the people had spared them for sacrifice. Then Samuel, with calm indignation, said: "Stay, and I will tell thee what Jehovah hath said to me this night. When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and Jehovah anointed thee king over Israel? Wherefore, then, didst thou not obey the voice of Jehovah? hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying his voice? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, to hearken than the fat of rams: for rebellion is the sin of witchcraft, and self-will is iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

Saul professed repentance, but this was a second fault, and not lightly to be forgiven. Nor, indeed, did the prophet possess the power. Accordingly, he proceeded to quit the king's presence. As he turned away, Saul seized his robe, and it rent; whereupon Samuel, availing himself of the token, said, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine which is better than thou." "Nevertheless," replied the king in agony of mind, "disgrace me not before the elders of my people and before Israel, for I acknowledge my sin." Thus speaking, he fell on the ground and worshipped Jehovah.

While the king lay prostrate there, Samuel demanded Agag to be brought. The chief of Amalek appeared with a joyous countenance; and as he approached his slayer, he, with barbaric heroism, said, "Truly, the bitterness of death is past." Then said Samuel, "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women;" and he hewed Agag in pieces before Jehovah in Gilgal.

The two great actors in this painful scene retired to their respective homes; Samuel to Ramah, and Saul to Gibeah.

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They never again saw each other's face, but the prophet ceased not to mourn for the downfall of the king.\*

### DAVID ANOINTED TO BE KING.

Saul was virtually deposed; who was to be his successor? Samuel hesitated to take any step. A secret fear of him had spread abroad.† Nor did he know the will of heaven. At length he was reassured. Jehovah appeared, and bade him go to Bethlehem, and anoint a son of Jesse, a reputable inhabitant of that ancient town. The prophet obeyed. Eliab, Jesse's oldest son, as of right, was presented to him first. Struck by his person, Samuel said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before me." "No," was the reply of the inward monitor; "look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for man looks on the eyes, but Jehovah looks on the heart." Seven sons passed in succession before the prophet, and were all rejected. "Are these all?" asked he. "Except the youngest, who is tending the sheep." "Send and fetch him." David came; he was ruddy, fair of eyes, and of a pleasing aspect. "This is he," said Jehovah to his servant; "arise, anoint him." Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren; and the Spirit of Jehovah came upon David, and rested on him from that day forward.

Thus was the sceptre transferred from Benjamin to Judah. Judah was already a powerful tribe. It was destined to take the lead in Israel. The trial with a smaller tribe had failed. The new principle of strength rather than culture looked auspicious, and, under Divine Providence, proved eminently successful. Nor was the particular choice now made without high recommendations. The family of Jesse had a long and worthy ancestry, which went back beyond Ruth and Boaz; ‡ while of all Jesse's sons, David, though the youngest, was the most distinguished. Besides his personal advantages, he was wise, valiant, eloquent, and devout. In great repute was he held for skill in handling the harp. Of a high and noble nature, he courted danger, and while he ordinarily performed the quiet duties of the shepherd, he, when the occasion demanded, led the village choirs, or charmed the first circles of the city with

\* 1 Sam. xv. 34, 35.

† 1 Sam. xvi. 4.

‡ Ruth iv. 18, seq.

## SAUL; OR, THE EARLY DAYS

his poetry and his music, or kept the prowling lion at bay, or drove back marauding Philistines, or headed an incursion into the territories of Amalek. Excelling in all exercises of strength and skill, he never seemed so much at home as when engaged in devotion. Often at nightfall, at sunrise, or eventide, did he wander forth on the heights around his native place, or withdrew into the shady recesses of some cool valley, and there muse in rapt meditation on "the shining heavens so full of state," and on Him who hangeth the earth upon nothing, and filleth all with the light of his presence and the glory of his power. There was it that words like the following would spring to his lips:—

"The heavens declare the glory of God,  
And the firmament sheweth the work of his hands;  
Day uttereth speech unto day,  
And night sheweth knowledge unto night."

### SAUL'S MELANCHOLY.

The anointing of David soon became publicly known. Its significance was seen by no one so well as by Saul. Thus had it been with him. It was the first step to the throne. It was an irrevocable step. Clearly, his own crown was forfeited. He was a lost man. Gloom settled on his heart and darkened his brow. His servants, fearing to approach him in his evil moods, at last prevailed on him to try the effect of music.

The Philistine power revived once more. Recruited by an interval of tranquillity, it seized the first occasion to resume its aggressions in Israel. Saul's indisposition seemed to offer an augury of success. Besides, rumour said that the king and the prophet had disagreed, and that the latter had even declared the throne vacant. Now, then, was the time to strike a decisive blow for the sole dominion of the land. With characteristic daring, they invaded Judah, and took up a strong position somewhat to the west of Bethlehem. This was as much as to give a personal challenge to the anointed hero of Israel. Saul assembled his forces and went out to meet the Philistines. The two armies occupied the ridges of two opposite hills, with a valley between them. Then came there forth a man of huge stature, in height some ten feet, armed with weapons correspondingly massive, and insultingly challenged the hosts of Israel. The hearts of Saul and his troops were

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smitten with dismay. No one would venture out to meet the Philistine. Morning and evening, for forty days, did Goliath stalk forth and approach the Israelite camp; but no reply was vouchsafed.

Meanwhile, David had left the court of Saul, and returned to the sheepfolds. Jesse, however, wished to send food to his sons who were in the army, and having loaded the youngest with the supply, bade him hasten to the camp. Arriving in safety, he performed his errand, and was engaged in conversation with his brethren, who were delighted to see him, and to receive the proofs he bore that they were not forgotten at home, when again appeared the gigantic form of Goliath, who, now confident of impunity, threw their cowardice in the teeth of the Hebrews, and dared them to take revenge. The moment they saw him they were filled with alarm and fled. David was no less astounded than grieved at what he saw. "Is there," he asked, "no one to curb that insolence?" "No one," was the answer; alas! no one, though even the king's daughter has been offered as a reward.

Hastening to Saul, David offered his services. "Thy puny arm against this man of war? No, child, no!" Then David said to the king: "Thy servant was keeping his father's sheep, and there came a lion and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went after him and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and slew him: so will I do to this uncircumcised Philistine, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. Jehovah delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and will deliver me out of the hand of the Philistine." And Saul said unto David, "Go; and Jehovah be with thee!"\*

### DAVID'S FIGHT WITH GOLIATH.

Trembling for the life of the young hero, Saul cast about how he might most effectually protect him. His own armour would be best. It was brought and put on David. He was mailed from head to foot; the king's sword was at his side, the king's spear was in his hand. Thus equipped, he assayed to go forth; but found himself unable to move. He therefore cast them all off, and becoming himself again, took his shepherd's crook in one hand and his sling in the other, and having

\* 1 Sam. xvii.

carefully chosen five smooth stones out of a brook, he advanced to answer the challenge.

Hearing that a champion of Israel had at length appeared, Goliath went forth to meet him. As he drew near to David, he stopped and burst into a fit of scornful indignation. "That stripling? Am I a dog that thou, boy, comest to me with staves? Come, child, come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field." David simply replied: "Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied; this day will Jehovah deliver thee into mine hand, and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel; and all this assembly shall know that Jehovah saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is Jehovah's, and he will give you into our hands."

As the two champions approached, David slung a stone, which struck Goliath, and piercing his forehead, put an end to his days. The giant fell upon the earth. David ran up, placed himself on the huge frame, drew the sword at its side, and cut off its head. The Philistines saw, and fled panic-struck. The men of Israel shouted throughout their ranks, and then, rushing down, fell on their consternated foes, whom they drove before them with fearful slaughter. Meanwhile, the young victor was brought before the king. "Whose son art thou?" "The son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite." The light of joy and triumph left the monarch's brow as he heard these words. His rival was the conqueror.

#### DAVID AND JONATHAN.

There was one who stood at Saul's right hand, whose soul the radiant young hero won, not more by his prowess than his modest yet manly bearing.\* This was Jonathan, the king's favourite son. Enamoured of David, he begged him to go no more back to his father's house, but to remain at court. "What! in my shepherd's attire?" "No, in my own." Therefore, Jonathan stripped himself, and put his garments on David, giving him even his sword, his bow, and his girdle.

\* 1 Sam. xviii.

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The prince's sentiments were shared by all. David was universally loved. The current of enthusiasm the king could not withstand; and so David was set at the head of the army, and employed on missions of the highest import. Wherever he went, he was received with ardent greetings; and when, finally, the troops returned home with the monarch at their head in triumphal array, bearing the spoil, bands of women with tabret and lute came forth to meet them, dancing and singing responsively—

“Saul hath slain his thousands,  
But David his myriads.”

This was gall to the king. After such praise, thought he within himself, what can the stripling have more but the kingdom? Thenceforward Saul looked on David with an evil eye.

The next day the monarch was so moody, that the youthful lyrist was set before him to charm the bad spirit away. Unperceived, Saul seized a javelin and cast it at the player. The weapon missed its aim, and David hastened from the royal presence. The danger increased the love of the people, and embittered the hatred of the king. Force having failed, guile was attempted. The successful champion of Israel had won the king's daughter's hand. Merab, instead of becoming David's wife, was given to Adriel. But there was Michal, her younger sister. Saul's servants dealt with David that he should seek her hand. Knowing that he stood ill with Saul, the young hero feared to lift his eyes to the princess. “I am a poor man, and slightly esteemed.” “The king desireth no other dowry than a hundred foreskins of the Philistines,” replied the crafty courtiers, executing their master's will in putting David on an enterprise in which they judged he could not fail to perish. David accepted the condition; and going forth with a small troop, slew two hundred Philistines, whose foreskins he brought to Saul. Refusal was impossible, and for deceit there was no more room. Michal, consequently, became David's wife.

Saul's jealousy and distemper daily increased, while, on the other hand, David grew more and more in the popular favour. Ere long the king ordered his servants, and even Jonat<sup>h</sup> to plot against David's life.\* Then Jonathan's sin

\* 1 Sam. xix.

became David's shield. The prince freely remonstrated with the king, and obtained a promise that his friend should be safe. Under this royal safeguard, David returned to court. Again was there war with the Philistines; and David went forth, and slew them with a great slaughter. The achievement brought back all the fell jealousy of Saul. David tried the magic of his harp; but it was done at the peril of his life, for the king again cast a javelin at the poet, and when he had escaped, pursued him to his home, where, but for his wife's love and devices, he would have perished. The persecuted deliverer of Israel hastened to Samuel at Ramah. They both took refuge in the house of the prophets, near the city. Then Saul sent messengers to bring David back. They came, and they entered the college; but when they beheld the prophets prophesying, with the venerable Samuel at their head, the emissaries were seized with the same spirit, and joined in the sacred anthems. Another band of messengers came, and they prophesied in like manner. A third attempt had the same result. Then the king resolved to go and take the hateful David with his own hands. He went accordingly, and was overcome by the Spirit of God, so that once more in his life Saul was among the prophets.

The evil spirit returned, and David finding himself safe no longer in the sacred college, determined to seek concealment in Ramah itself. There he had an interview with Jonathan. The prince tried to give his dear friend confidence by assuring him that he knew all his father's designs, and would watch for the protection of his life. David replied that Saul, aware of their friendship, studiously kept from Jonathan what he purposed respecting himself. "There is," he continued, "but one step between death and me." "Whatever you wish," said the prince, "that will I do; but I cannot believe the evil report." "Make trial to-morrow, when the king will expect me at the feast of the new moon; make trial of the king's disposition; faithful you will be, or else kill me now with thy own hand; but deliver me not to thy father's." "I swear fidelity to thee here before Jehovah; the trial I will make; on the third day be thou at the stone Ezel."

The feast came, and David was missed. When the king inquired the cause, Jonathan framed an excuse. His father's anger burst forth in consequence. After bitter reproaches, he

said to Jonathan: "As long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the earth, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore, send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die." When Jonathan asked, "Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?" he was answered by a javelin, thrown by his own father's hand. The prince rose from table, in grief for David, rather than for the disgrace he had received. Hastening into the field, he gave his friend the warning on which they had agreed. The two took a hasty embrace, when Jonathan returned to the city, and David became a fugitive.

Turning his steps toward the north, David sought shelter in Nob, where he satisfied his hunger with a portion of shew-bread.\* In his necessity, he had left unprovided with arms, but here he obtained the very sword which he had taken from Goliath. From Nob, prudence directed his steps westward, to the Philistine city of Gath. There he was nearly recognised, and, to elude detection, feigned idiotcy. Finding no safety but in flight, he struck across to the south-east, and entering Judah, hid himself in the cave of Adullam.† Thither came to him, first, all his own family; and then every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered around him, and he became captain over them; and there were with him about four hundred men.

David had thus assumed a dangerous post. What was this but to raise the standard of revolt? Conscious of the peril, he resolved to put his father and mother in safety, and for that purpose he went to Mizpeh of Moab, and intrusted them to the care of the king. Prepared now for any extremity, David, under a prophetic impulse, left the cave, and began to move up and down the highlands of Judea, making the forest of Hareth his rendezvous. The news was carried to Saul. Then fear smote the king, and with fear came rage. He rated the courtiers with misprision of treason, and even charged Jonathan with instigating David to rebellion. Informed that David had been succoured at Nob, he sent for Ahimelech the priest, and all his father's house, and having reproached them with their hospitality to his foe, commanded them to be slain. No Hebrew hand dared obey the sacrilegious order. But Doeg, the Edomite, was there, and at the king's bidding the s<sup>1</sup>--- s<sup>1</sup>

\* 1 Sam. xxi.      † 1 Sam. xxii.



upon the priests, and slew of them eighty-five. "And Nob, the city of the priests, smote he with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep."\* One of Ahimelech's sons, by name Abiathar, escaped, and reported the atrocity to David.

Forthwith David seized an opportunity to serve his country. The Philistines besieged Keilah, which stood only a little to the south-west of Adullam. Hither, under divine guidance, he led his little band, and delivering the city, entered within its walls. When intelligence of the exploit was borne to Saul, he exulted and said, "He is in my hands; let us go down and take the city."† While the king made his preparations, David ascertained that he could not place reliance on the inhabitants of the place. Therefore, he went forth and took refuge in the wilderness of Ziph, at the north-western head of the Dead Sea. There Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him out of the king's hand.

In the midst of his straits, he received a visit which gave him delight as well as strength. His dear friend Jonathan came to him, and, among other noble words, uttered these: "Fear not, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next thee." The hiding-place of David was revealed to Saul. Forthwith the king mustered his forces, and went in pursuit. David hurried southward, to the wilderness of Maon. Thither came Saul. The pursuit grew hot. Once the two were separated only by an intervening mountain. The chase, however, was suddenly stopped by news conveyed to Saul that the Philistines, profiting by his absence, had invaded Israel. The king returned, and David made the cave of Engeddi his stronghold.

Having driven the invaders back, the king returned to the task of capturing David.‡ Did not his kingdom depend on his success? Could a monarch who had poured forth the blood of priests like water hesitate to slay one troublesome servant? Taking with him three thousand chosen men, Saul quickly came on the traces of the wanderer. Ignorant, however, of the country, he was soon nearer to David than he thought. On one occasion, he entered a cavern which was one of David's lurking-places. Thus had he fallen into the power of the very man whose life he sought to take. Urged by his troop

\* 1 Sam. xxii.

† 1 Sam. xxiii.

‡ 1 Sam. xxiv.

to slay his deadly foe, David merely cut off a portion of the king's garment as a proof that the latter had been in his power. As soon as Saul had quitted the cave, David left it also, and calling after the king, bowed down in obeisance before him, and showing him the skirt of his robe said, "Jehovah judge between thee and me; my hand shall touch thee not." Then Saul replied, "Is this thy voice, my son, David?" and overcome with emotion, he wept, and said to David, "Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil; and now behold I know well that thou shalt surely be king."

The reconciliation was of short duration. The king had gone too far to recede. He resumed his efforts against the life of one whom he had called his son. David's confidence began to wane. He, therefore, traversed the breadth of the country, and sought protection with Achish, king of Gath.\*

During these events, Saul's mind became sorely troubled. The trouble was carried to frenzy when he heard that the Philistines were with large forces marching into his territories. Depressed by disappointment and distracted by crime, he was totally unfit to meet the emergency. Assembling his forces, he did nothing but retreat. Driven to do something, he did the worst thing possible, for he drew the enemy into the very heart of Israel. At length, both resolved to bring the matter to an issue on the great battle-ground of the land, the plain of Jezreel, in the north-eastern extremity of which Saul came to a stand, while the Philistines pitched their camp on its south-western boundary. The night before the final conflict came, Saul was beset with unreal alarms. The forms of those murdered priests haunted his bewildered imagination. The skirt of his robe rose perpetually before his eyes, the moment they were closed for sleep. Then he saw the hated David on the throne, and his own courtiers bowed before the usurper. He had, however, heard the rumour that David was in the Philistine rear; could he but cut his way through the ranks, and plant his dagger in the traitor's soul! The next moment the image of Michal rose before him, and reproached her father for having torn her from David, and given her to another. Yet could he but win the battle the next day, he would banish these fancies. Was it possible? "No!" whispered—awfully

\* 1 Sam. xxvii.; xxviii.; xxxi.; 2 Sam. i.

#### EARLY DAYS OF THE HEBREW MONARCHY.

whispered—a spectre which flashed across his sight. “Samuel!” shrieked the terrified king. He threw himself on his couch, and as he lay he thought, if only that “no” could be recalled! “Samuel!”—then he shouted—“Samuel! come and unsay thy word.” The vociferation brought Abner into his tent. A conference ensued. At the end of a few moments the king’s chariot was dashing down the plain. It stopped at Endor. Having changed his apparel he entered a cave, and there stood a woman accounted to have a familiar spirit.\* “Bring him up,” said the disguised but well-known monarch, “bring him up whom I shall name unto thee—bring me up Samuel.” Acting her part adroitly, the woman declared, “An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle.” Then, by the aid of ventriloquism, she made as if Samuel said to Saul, “Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?” “I am sore distressed,” answered the king; “for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me; and I have called thee, that thou mayest make known to me what I shall do.” Then came the terrific words, “The Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to David.”

The morning had hardly dawned when the king led his forces into the field, resolved to command himself, yet totally unfit to command. The day went against the Hebrews. They fled, hotly pursued by the Philistines, who slew Jonathan and wounded Saul. On the point of being captured, he bade his armour-bearer kill him. Fear withheld the servant’s hand. But taken Saul would not be, and he accordingly threw himself upon his sword.

“Hark! the shouts of the insolent conquerors!  
I see their torches blazing in the air;  
Their thousand flashing swords—they come! they come!  
Implous Philistines! ye shall find me here,  
But like a monarch—dead!” †

\* 1 Sam. xxviii.    † ALFIERI.

# DAVID;

OR,

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE POET-KING OF ISRAEL.

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It was a sad day for Israel when Saul perished on the mountains of Gilboa. Ruin seemed inevitable. The rout was complete. All persons of distinction who survived the battle fled across the Jordan, and left to the Philistines undisputed possession of the heart of the country. What, indeed, was there that could withstand their power? Had they not passed victoriously from the south to the north of the land? Had they not swept every obstacle away before them? Surely, Israel was theirs.

While, however, the Philistines triumphed in the north, their own country was invaded in the south. Eager to strike a decisive blow, the Philistine general had drawn into his ranks all the disposable forces of his nation. Thus left undefended, Philistia seemed to invite an attack. On her southern borders there hung a foe only too able and too willing to profit by the opportunity. At the moment, the Amalekites, with their habits of predatory warfare, seem to have made a successful incursion into Egypt, and to have been masters of the whole district which lies between the land of the Nile and the land of the Philistines. Made confident by success, they fell on defenceless Philistia, and advanced unchecked into the centre of the land, where they seized the important city of Ziklag. After sacking the place, they set it on fire, and then, like true sons of the desert, withdrew with all the plunder they could carry and all the captives they found convenient. They were objects of their special preference. Among others they took with them as captives two of David's wives.

## DAVID; OR, THE LIFE AND TIMES OF

was yet smoking when that hero, sent back by king Achish through the jealousy of his captains, drew near with his small band of heroes. Those who had survived the carnage speedily gathered around him. The details of the massacre and conflagration passed from lip to lip; and as the narratives made known the loss of friend after friend—here a beloved daughter, there a fond wife; now a venerable grandfather, and now a smiling infant—the hearts of the mourners became too big for restraint, and they burst forth in a flood of passionate tears. The weeping soon rose into wailing. The weeping and the wailing became universal. There was a storm of grief. Everywhere men and women beat their breasts, moaning and shrieking. On a sudden, as a gust of wind rushes on the lake and tosses it into confusion, a movement begins, which in a few moments becomes a whirlpool of disorder and distress. Half frantic with trouble, the agitated masses must have some victim. David shall perish, for he is a foreigner, and he came not to the aid of the city. Stones are raised for his destruction; but the young man escapes, being reserved for a great future.

### DAVID'S EDUCATION.

Before we enter on a narrative of his career, we will try to become acquainted with David in his own personal qualities. Our materials of information are very scanty, but they suffice to disclose to us one or two leading features of his youthful character. Of David's physical qualities we know little, except that he was beautiful in person. His nature, however, must have been richly endowed by his Creator's hand. To a poetic temperament he united an inborn valour. Piety was his predominant quality. In other moral affections he stood on a level with his companions, but in devoutness he had no equal. His religious sense was alike rich, tender, and delicate. Like a generous vine in early spring, religion was the sap of the young man's life; and when in later years the sap had passed into fruit, the fruit proved marvellously abundant and beautiful. Next to his love of God was his love of home. The domestic sentiments were very strong in David. Wife and child were always dear to him. And the heart that was fraught with the richer affection of love could not fail to have a nestling place for friendship.

These natural gifts of David underwent a very auspicious

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discipline. By ancestral memories his mind, carried back through a long line of distinguished ancestors who were the religious lights of the world, was inspired with high and venerable feelings, and while imbued with a becoming self-respect, was led to settle on Jehovah, the maker of heaven and earth, as the ground alike of all thought and of his own inner being. With a mind thus stayed on God, he looked at the universe simply as God's theatre of action, or rather as a combination of divine agencies. Such a thing as brute matter he did not know. All nature lived, and the life of every separate object was to him the life of God. The world around and above was a kind of animated organism, whose members were God's hands and feet, whose sounds were God's voice, whose coverings were God's pavilion, whose movements were God's chariot. Religion, therefore, came to him from every part of the complicated and marvellous whole. The sunrise and the sunset were his religious teachers. He imbibed sacred emotion from the radiance of the star-lit skies. And his converse with nature was the more influential and suggestive, because he passed his time mostly in the midst of her own living and touching scenes. A shepherd boy, he watched his flocks by night on the open downs, over which was spread the soft lustre of the moon, and above which shone the brilliant lamps of heaven. By day he led them to the well-watered dell, and to the sweet pasture of the meadow, and sheltered them from the sun's heat under the "shadow of a great rock," or the outspread and leafy branches of an aged terebinth. And ever, as he thus lived *in* nature, did he live *with* nature. His hallowed imagination personified every object and made every object an instrument of God. Hence, nature was his school-mistress. Her lessons he received every moment and at every step.

Of schooling, in the modern sense of the term, he may have known little or even nothing. Yet every Hebrew father instructed his son in the sacred writings; and the religious observances of every home enriched the heart while they informed the mind of the young. From the public observances of religion, too, the young Israelite learnt wisdom and gained holy impulses.

Besides these general influences, David may have received benefit from the schools of the prophets, recently instituted by

Samuel. Certainly, the general influence of the age was favourable to the moral and religious development of the susceptible son of Jesse. Israel was just rising with the vigour of early manhood. The social chaos of the period of the Judges had been composed and adjusted under the wise and strong hand of the last ruler who bore that name. The spirit of prophecy, in its religious vitality and social significance, was in the first flush of its vigorous youth. Even politically, the actual condition was hopeful. It is true the Philistines gave ceaseless trouble, and even threatened the independence of the community; but they were the last internal enemy; the rest had disappeared before the persistent efforts and the unwearied courage of Israel. Now, then, was the season for a final blow for national freedom. Even Saul's disaster only provoked determination. God's promise had not become void on the plain of Jezreel, nor on Mount Gilboa. All that was wanted was a faithful heart and a valiant arm, and the land of promise would belong exclusively to the people of Jehovah. Thoughts like these were obviously in the public mind. The passions and aims they were fitted to awaken became the ruling power in Israel. In the soul of the good and great Samuel they found a centre, whence they radiated forth to give light and impulse to others. Hence, in part, came his yielding to the popular desire for a king; hence the selection of Saul, and hence, too, the selection of David.

Here, in this living, breathing world, was the school of that young shepherd. His teachers were noble aspirations, heroic memories, religious inspirations, and, we must add, national hates. His instructors were a mother's love, a father's care, the ancient archives of his people, and the ever-speaking voice of the present Jehovah. With what we should term a cottage for his home, he looked back on a long line of forefathers, whose distinction lay, not in their wealth, nor in their titles, nor in their power, but in their moral worth and religious fidelity. And while he received a deathless lesson from each as he ran over their names, he, in performing the pleasing and oft-repeated exercise, ever and anon cast out a look from his introverted eye, and saw some scene of pastoral simplicity, or some display of celestial grandeur; and beholding the objects, sank back into himself again in a crowd of pleasurable emotions and adoring wonder; or, perhaps, he was startled

from his domestic reveries and religious meditations by some tokens of alarm.

It was a troubled time when David was growing into manhood. Agitated also was the south of Palestine, where was his home. The half-barbarous tribes of the wilderness ever lurked on the borders, eager for a foray. Philistine freebooters made constant incursions into the villages of Judah, and sometimes dared to assail its towns. In such a condition, a shepherd's life was also a soldier's life. Only by constant vigilance, and ready prowess, could the flocks and herds be protected against marauding bands. The sword and the bow were quite as needful as the crook. Then, beasts of prey prowled in convenient spots, and never let the mind sink into complete security. Against these perils David had to take constant precautions. Here was his training-school, and his training-school was also the arena of his exploits. David's soul was cast in an heroic mould. If he had not been a poet, he must have been a soldier. And the discipline through which he was conducted was such as to make his heroism chivalrous. Living in an age when the issue of encounters depended more on individual prowess than marshalled thousands, David possessed the very qualities which commanded success. Noble in soul, he was daring of hand; and alike noble and daring, he held the secret of striking impulse, like a flash of lightning, into the heart alike of a hundred or a hundred thousand, and so won the day in a skirmish or in a battle, by the overbearing force of his own imperial will.

#### DAVID'S SACRED SONGS.

A sketch of the educational influences through which David passed would be seriously defective if it made no mention of his exercises in poetic composition. From an early age, David, in all probability, gave poetic utterance to his deep, rich, and exuberant religious sentiments. On a soul like his, a necessity was laid no less to sing than to fight. The pressure of circumstances must have struck notes out of a soul which, like his own harp, was ever ready and apt to the touch. A sacred song, produced and sung to the lyre by David when yet under age, is that ode which is called the eighth Psalm:—

"O, Jehovah, our Lord,  
How excellent is thy name in all the earth!"



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Thou hast set thy glory above the heavens !  
Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings  
Hast thou ordained praise,  
To put thine adversaries to shame,  
And to silence the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers,  
The moon and the stars which thou hast ordained,  
What is man that thou art mindful of him,  
And the son of man that thou carest for him ?  
Yet thou hast made him little lower than the angels ;  
Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour ;  
Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands ;  
Thou hast put all things under his feet—  
All sheep and oxen,  
Yea, and the beasts of the forest ;  
The fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea,  
And whatsoever passeth through the paths of the deep.  
O, Jehovah, our Lord,  
How excellent is thy name in all the earth."

While the thoughts of this pastoral were suggested by the flocks grazing in the plain, and the herds browsing on the hills, and the birds singing and flying over flocks and herds, and the whole animated and charming scene, the nineteenth Psalm seems to have been an outburst of adoring wonder and pious reflection, called forth by the rising sun, as in that eastern clime it broke all of a sudden on the awaking eyes of the shepherd-poet, leaning on his staff, in the fresh breath of the earliest morning :—

"The heavens relate the glory of God,  
And the firmament declareth the work of his hands ;  
Day to day uttereth speech,  
And night to night sheweth knowledge.  
No speech and no words,  
Their voice is not heard ;  
Yet through all the earth their sound goeth forth,  
And to the end of the world their words.  
In them he hath fixed a tent for the sun,  
And he as a bridegroom cometh forth from his chamber ;  
He rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course.  
From one end of the heavens he goeth forth,  
And his circuit is to the other end,  
So that nothing is hidden from his heat.

The law of Jehovah is perfect, refreshing the soul ;  
The precepts of Jehovah are true, making wise the simple ;

## THE POET-KING OF ISRAEL.

The statutes of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart ;  
The commandments of Jehovah are clear, enlightening the eyes ;  
The fear of Jehovah is pure, enduring for ever ;  
The laws of Jehovah are true and altogether righteous ;  
More desirable than gold, yea, than much fine gold :  
Sweeter also than honey, and the droppings of the honey-comb.  
Moreover, by them is thy servant admonished ;  
In the observing of them is great reward.

Who can discern his errors ?

Cleanse me from hidden faults !

From presumptuous offences hold back thy servant ;

Let them not have dominion over me !

Then shall I be blameless and guiltless of the great transgression.

May the words of my mouth be acceptable,

And the meditations of my heart,

Before thee, O Jehovah,

My rock and my Redeemer."

A third poem—the twenty-ninth Psalm—struck out of David by a thunder-storm, which swept the land from north to south—is replete with images which call up the early life of the great Hebrew poet, and will, in some of its aspects, reproduce that life at least in those who are familiar with oriental scenery, and know with what terrific effect the grander agencies of nature operate in western Asia.

" Give to Jehovah, ye sons of the mighty,  
Give to Jehovah glory and strength ;  
Give to Jehovah the glory due to his name ;  
Worship Jehovah in holy beauty !  
The voice of Jehovah upon the waters !  
The God of glory thundereth !  
Jehovah thundereth upon the great waters !  
The voice of Jehovah is powerful !  
The voice of Jehovah is majestic !  
The voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars !  
Jehovah breaketh even the cedars of Lebanon !  
And he maketh Lebanon to skip like a calf,  
And Anti-lebanon like a young buffalo !  
The voice of Jehovah divideth the flames of fire,  
The voice of Jehovah shaketh the wilderness,  
The voice of Jehovah shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh,  
The voice of Jehovah maketh the hinds to calve,  
And layeth bare the forests ;  
And in his temple of the universe  
Everything exclaims,  
Glory (to God).

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Jehovah is enthroned on the flood,  
Enthroned is Jehovah as king for ever.

May Jehovah give strength to his people ;  
May Jehovah bless his people with prosperity ! ”

He who could sing in strains like these while young, might well sing for all ages. By no means did all the poems that are contained in the Bible proceed from the lips of David. Yet is David at once the master-hand and the inspiring soul of that literally priceless collection of sacred songs. Other Hebrews before David had composed odes of triumph ; but of devotional poetry, properly so called, David is the father. The poems he composed became no less the impulse than the standard of after ages. With a force peculiar to inspired genius, he created the devotional lyre of Israel. As the first, so did David ever remain the best, of the Hebrew lyrists. Exhausting all the topics, he left for his successors little more than imitation. This universality he owed to the naturalness of his training in childhood and youth. He spoke out the fulness of his human heart, and so ran through all the moods of the loving, adoring, sinful, repenting, needy heart of man. Hence his acceptability. The words of David speak to all our religious experiences, and all our religious experiences find appropriate utterance in them. Accordingly, the psalter is the world's prayer-book. Here is a common altar and a common offering. Being such, the psalter is a common bond of union. It tends to make all men brothers, by making them all worshippers. It gathers them around their common Father, and so makes them conscious of their common origin, their common interests, their common duties, and their common final home. No sympathy is equal to that of common prayer for melting hearts into unity and informing them with love. The Bible is of inappreciable value if only because it contains the Psalms of David. A deathless power, together with a deathless love, is thereby infused into the frame-work of human society, which is not the less efficacious because it works unseen by ordinary sight, and which lets no day pass without making some contribution towards harmonizing and blessing the whole world, irrespectively of time, country, sect, and colour.

## THE POST-KING OF ISRAEL.

### DAVID LIBERATES HIS COUNTRY.

The reader may, from what has preceded, form some conception of the young hero whom the frantic inhabitants of Ziklag were ready to stone because he had not performed an impossibility. But the injury he could not prevent, he resolved to avenge. The resolution was not taken without divine permission. But where was the foe? Inquiry informed David that they were lurking in some recess in the Vale of Besor, south of Ziklag, whither they had withdrawn, and whence they probably meditated other onslaughts. David's force was small. Out of the six hundred of which it consisted, two hundred broke down on the march. What is called an accident favoured the enterprise. While yet uncertain of the station of the enemy, they came upon an Egyptian, who had been a servant to one of the marauding Amalekites. The man was on the point of perishing. Abandoned by his master because sick, he had lain on the hot soil three days without nourishment. By great and judicious care, the Hebrews revived his almost ebbing life and strength. "And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company?" And he answered: "Swear unto me by God that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company. And when he had brought David down, behold they were spread abroad upon all the land, eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines and out of the land of Judah."\* Seizing this opportunity David fell on the revellers, and putting them to the sword, recovered all the property they had plundered, and rescued his own two wives.

Returning towards the north, David came to the two hundred exhausted soldiers who had dropped on the way, when an incident occurred which is too characteristic to be omitted. Loaded with booty, the four hundred strong men refused to let the two hundred weak ones share in the spoils of victory. The common leader, however, interposed. The victory came not by the hand of man, but was given of God. So, then, the fruits of the enterprise were God's. Accordingly, a just partition must be made. Were they not all brethren? Had the

\* 1 Sam. xxx. 15, 16.

two hundred failed in duty? or merely in strength? They had done their best, nor was what they did without an advantage, for they had kept watch over the stones. Therefore David issued this order :

"As his part that goeth down to the battle,  
So his part that tarrieth by the baggage ; "

and the command became a permanent ordinance in Israel.

Re-entering Ziklag, David found himself surrounded with spoils. A large portion of these had been plundered from Judah. To Judah, as was proper, David made handsome presents. In the distribution of his bounties, he may have had in mind the influence they might exert in favour of his obtaining the crown to which he had been called of God, and for which he had been anointed of Samuel. Certainly, the elders of Judah, who were his friends, received special attention, nor is it likely that such an opportunity for conciliating enemies would be suffered to go unimproved.

On the third day after his return to Ziklag, a man suddenly appeared in David's presence. His clothes were rent; earth was on his head; he fell prostrate before the hero.

"Whence comest thou?"

"Out of the camp of Israel am I escaped."

"How went the matter?"

"The people that fell not, fled; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead."

"How knowest thou that?"

"Saul threw himself on his spear; but, pressed by an advancing enemy, and fearing to fall alive into their hands, he bade me kill him. I obeyed; and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was upon his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord."

Then David, and those that were with him, rent their clothes, and mourned, and wept, and fasted until evening for Saul and Jonathan, and for the house of Israel, because they were fallen by the sword. And to the messenger David said: "Wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the Lord's anointed? Thy blood be upon thine own head." Then calling one of his young men, David said, "Go near, and fall upon him." And the soldier smote him to death. Then retiring into private, David gave vent to his grief in an elegy which has obtained the name of

## THE PORT-KING OF ISRAEL.

### THE SONG OF THE BOW.

"Thy beauty, O Israel,  
Is cut down on thy high places.  
Alas! the heroes have fallen!  
Tell it not in Gath,  
Publish it not in the streets of Ashalon,  
Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice,  
Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.  
Ye mountains of Gilboa!  
No dew, no rain,  
Be upon you!  
No longer be rich in offerings!  
For on you was thrown away the shield of the hero,  
The shield of Saul,  
As if he had not been an anointed king.  
From the blood of the slain,  
From the fat of the mighty,  
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,  
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.  
Saul and Jonathan!  
Bound in life by tender love,  
In their death they were not divided.  
Than eagles swifter!  
Than lions stronger!  
Oh, daughters of Israel,  
Weep over Saul.  
He gave you the delight of purple attire,  
He adorned your apparel with gold.  
How fell the heroes in the midst of the battle!  
Jonathan!  
On thine own high places is he cut down!  
Grieved am I on thy account,  
Jonathan, my brother!  
Dear wast thou to me, very dear;  
Marvellous was thy love to me,  
Surpassing even women's love.  
Alas! the heroes have fallen,  
The weapons of war have perished!"

A survey of the condition of Israel assured David that the time had come for action. The crown that had fallen from the head of Saul was his by right. Now was the time to take possession of it. But the middle and northern parts of the country, if not still in the hands of the Philistines, were disturbed and weak. A rival, too, was put forward. Flying with the remnants of Saul's army across the Jordan.

his general, made a stand at Mahanaim, and there proclaimed Ishbosheth, the son of the deceased monarch, then forty years of age.\* The act seems to have been acceptable, for the power thus established in Peræa extended itself across the river, and spread so far down southwardly as to comprehend the tribe of Benjamin.

Meanwhile, David had made Hebron in Judah the seat of his government. The rival powers were thus contiguous. Collision was inevitable. Leaving the feeble Ishbosheth at Mahanaim, Abner passed into Gibeon, and there was met by Joab, the general of David. Twelve chosen warriors from each side advanced against each other. They all fell. Then the fight became general. Abner's forces were routed. Seeing the commander himself in flight, Asahel, who was as light of foot as a wild roe, hastened to pursue the general. The young man soon came up with the fugitive. Unwilling to take his life, the old soldier bade him desist. His words were unavailing. Compelled to choose between suffering death or inflicting it, he seized his opportunity and drove his spear through his pursuer. Effecting his escape, yet still followed by Joab's troops, Abner saw himself reduced to the necessity of treating. "Then Abner called to Joab and said, Shall the sword devour for ever? Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? How long shall it be then ere thou bid the people return from following thy brethren?"† The appeal prevailed. The fugitives were spared. Yet the unnatural contest continued. At length Abner and Ishbosheth quarrelled. In consequence, the former made overtures to David. The overtures were accepted. Abner even went so far as to employ personal efforts to bring over the friends of Ishbosheth to his rival. Having with this view taken a southerly course, he visited David in Hebron. The interview was amicable in spirit and satisfactory in result. At its termination, Abner, dismissed in peace by the king, proceeded to accomplish his mission of conciliation.

Scarcely had Abner departed, however, before Joab returned from a warlike expedition to Hebron. He learnt that Abner had been with David and had gone forth to do David's work. Seized with the spirit of jealousy, and seeking revenge for the death of his brother Asahel, Joab, pretending to David that

\* 2 Sam. ii. 8—10.

† 2 Sam. ii. 26.

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Abner was acting deceitfully, sent messengers to bring him back. Abner returned. Affecting a desire for a secret interview, Joab drew the unsuspecting man aside and slew him. So base and barbarous a deed was likely to alienate irretrievably all the tribes that had sided with Ishbosheth. Policy, therefore, no less than manly feeling, made David abhor and repudiate his servant's crime. Special care was taken to show respect to the remains of the murdered general. David himself followed the bier in the midst of universal lamentation. At the sepulchre he uttered lines, a key to which is found in the right of the goel, or next of kin, to avenge the death of a relative.

### DAVID'S ELEGY ON ABNER.

"As a wretch dies, so died Abner.  
Thy hands were not bound,  
Thy feet were not put into chains;  
As they fall before the iniquitous,  
So fallest thou."

The description of so miserable an end smote the hearts of the people, and the whole multitude wept aloud.

Abner's death, however, brought ruin on the cause of Ishbosheth. When that strong arm fell motionless, the cause of Saul's son was left without support. Forthwith a conspiracy was formed, and the feeble king fell under the blows of assassins. The murderers, thinking to receive their reward, hastened to David. But deeds of the kind were revolting to him. He accordingly commanded the evil-doers to be slain.

These acts of combined pity and justice wrought powerfully for David with the outstanding tribes. The king of Hebron was manifestly kind-hearted and just. What blessings might not be expected under the government of such a man? Moreover, Jehovah had said to him—

"Thou shalt feed my people Israel,  
Thou shalt be prince over Israel."

And was not the hand of Jehovah conspicuous? The way had been wonderfully cleared. David was called to the throne of the united tribes. These feelings soon received practical utterance. An aggregate assembly of the representatives of all of Hebrew blood took place at Hebron. The



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there completed the appointment, and in his thirty-eighth year, David, after having reigned seven years and six months over Judah alone, became the king of the twelve tribes.

### DAVID'S REIGN OVER ALL ISRAEL.

The assumption by David of supreme power over eastern as well as western Palestine was an occasion of great national joy. All the eminent warriors whom David had drawn about him during his free life in the wilderness, and whom he had formed to extraordinary martial skill, gathered around their chief, and lent to his coronation at once strength, romance, and brilliancy. To the same centre flowed myriads from all parts of the land. Thither were carried provisions and luxuries in great variety and abundance. The priesthood as well as the army gave their support, and the grand ceremony was performed amid feasting and rejoicings which lasted for three days.

The sentiments with which the monarch himself entered on his office are such as to do him the highest credit. Piety toward God and justice to man formed the substance of David's intentions. The evidence is in the one hundred and first Psalm, which, according to the best authorities, was composed by the royal bard on his accession to the throne.

#### DAVID'S OWN CORONATION ODE.

"Of favour and justice will I sing;  
To thee, O Jehovah, will I strike the lyre.  
Thoughtfully will I act in a blameless way  
Towards those who shall be my subjects;  
I will walk in the integrity of my heart  
In the midst of my house.  
Nothing evil will I set before my eyes;  
Apostacy do I hate,  
It shall not become my master.  
The man of perverse heart shall quit my presence;  
The bad man I will disavow.  
Him who secretly slandereth his neighbour,  
I will destroy;  
Him who is haughty and ambitious,  
I will not endure.  
My eyes shall search for the faithful in the land,  
That they may dwell with me.  
He who walketh in a blameless way  
Shall be my servant ;

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He who practiseth deceit  
Shall not dwell in my house;  
He who speaketh falsehood  
Shall not prosper in my sight.  
Diligently will I destroy  
All the evil-doers of the land,  
Cutting off from Jehovah's city  
All the workers of iniquity."

This solemn inauguration of a king, whose dynasty was to be perpetuated for generations, was a great crisis in the Hebrew history. The republican institutions founded by Moses had come to an end. The spiritual theocracy which he had originated had entered a new phase and taken a material envelope. The old patriarchal constitution was so changed as scarcely to be recognisable. And yet, under the shade of a throne, republican ideas and sympathies maintained their existence. The civil equality of all Israelites was founded on the religious ideas which were the basis of their commonwealth. It was the individual, and not the state, that stood in intimate relations with Jehovah. Every Israelite, therefore, was equal to every other. If in some sense there were the elements of an aristocracy of birth, the distinction was not supported by either territorial possessions, or accumulations of wealth, or hereditary offices. It is true, there was a hierarchy; but no sooner did its power begin to assume large proportions than the race of prophets was called forward to qualify and subdue them. Indeed, such were the civil arrangements which had sprung from Moses, and which, when David began to reign, had had time to strike their roots into the heart of the people, that there was in Israel a constant tendency working in more directions than one toward a social level. In consequence, monarchy on the uplands of Palestine never could come to bear anything but a very distant resemblance to the huge and unwieldy despotisms of Mesopotamia, in which the individual was borne down, if not crushed, by the oppressive mass. The Israelites, therefore, were men, not slaves. Under their institutions, mind was developed and character matured. Regal in form, their government, even in its worst times, remained to no small extent republican in operation and effect. Consequently, the sphere of influence into which Israel now entered, veiling though it did the one true theocracy, prepared the way for its growth, development, and final manifestation.

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hearts and lives of all true worshippers of Jehovah and all faithful disciples of Christ.

The happy result thus indicated lay at a great distance in the day at which our narrative has arrived. As a state, Israel could be scarcely said to have then existed. Fine elements there were, but they lay scattered up and down the land. Indeed, the country itself was still in part occupied by enemies. A divided government had produced division of heart as well as of counsel. Only a strong hand could compress and mould these elements into a closely-compacted and well-ordered whole. Here, then, the great merit of David comes into view. He undertook, and he accomplished, the arduous task.

### DAVID MAKES JERUSALEM HIS CAPITAL.

David's first concern was to acquire a suitable capital. By no means was Hebron the proper place. Besides being too far south, it was but poorly defended by nature. One spot there was, one spot of all others, the ancient Jebus. It was a stronghold built by God's own hands. Consisting of huge masses of rock, with ravines and vales on all sides except the north, the place could be held by a handful of men against thousands. And so it had been held; for there the Jebusites still maintained their existence. Could they now be dispossessed? The reward would well repay any amount of effort. David called emulation to his aid, offering the chief command of his forces to whosoever should first enter the citadel. The honour was gained by Joab. The heathen were expelled, and the southern base of the mountain range became the city of David. From this point the settlement spread toward the north. Jerusalem grew with the growth of David's power, and became the capital of the whole land.

### DAVID MAKES HIMSELF MASTER OF THE WHOLE COUNTRY.

As soon as the king of Israel found himself firmly seated in an impregnable fortress, he began to take measures for bringing the whole country under his sway. His chief and nearest foe was Philistia. Never could it be possible for the land to develop its native resources, never could its institutions acquire solidity, so long as a powerful and daring enemy stood posted in the south-west; and how, while they remained within a few days' march, could the king of Israel venture an

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expedition to a distance? The details of the subjugation of the Philistines are imperfectly recorded. One incident is too honourable to David to be omitted. It was harvest time. The burning sun parched the soil and drained the rivulets. Hard pressed by the Philistines, and devoured by thirst, David was unable to suppress a word expressive of a wish for water. The only supply was in a well near the gate of Bethlehem; but the intervening space was held by the foe. The wish reached the ears of David's heroes, when three of them cut their way through the enemies' ranks, drew water from the well, and brought it to their famished sovereign. They held the cup to his parched lips, but drink he would not. "It is," he cried, "the price of blood, too dearly bought; be it far from me, O Jehovah, that I should drink it."\* The enthusiasm which so noble an act of self-denial must have called forth proved very serviceable. The Philistines, afraid that their hour was come, made gigantic endeavours. Not satisfied to repel the Israelites, they invaded Judah, and pressed forward to the very base of its threatening stronghold. They suffered a defeat. Little daunted, they again appeared under the walls of Jerusalem, and were again put to the rout. This time their overthrow was so complete, that David became the real master of southern Judea.†

With his power thus put beyond danger, David began to organise his government. Naturally and properly, religion received his first care. The ark was the central symbol of the Mosaic institutions. Rescued from the unclean hands of the Philistines, this token and assurance of Jehovah's presence had remained in the house of Abinadab at Kirjath-Jearim.‡ Before all things was it necessary that the ark should be placed in the new capital. So important an event deserved to be signalised in every possible manner. Thousands of persons accordingly streamed forth to the sacred spot. A procession was formed, and music put all its resources into requisition. The ark went forward, attended by this array. Arrived at a certain spot, the cart in which it was placed shook, and the precious treasure seemed likely to fall. Uzzah, a son of Abinadab, who with his brother Ahio conducted the conveyance, put out his hand to stay the ark, and was smitten with death, that all

\* 2 Sam. xxiii. 13—17; 1 Chron. xi. 10—19. 2 Sam. v.

† 2 Sam. v. 17, seq. ‡ 2 Sam. vi.; 1 Sam. v., vi.

might know that Jehovah needed not the aid of the puny arm of man. Fear hereupon seized David and his subjects; and the terrible ark was left in the house of Obed-edom. After three months, David learned that the family who had thus the charge of the holy symbol, enjoyed singular prosperity. Encouraged by the news, he made a second and a successful endeavour. The ark was placed on Mount Zion, in a *tent erected for it by the king*.

The occasion was one of universal gladness. Men's hearts were expanded. The heart of the monarch himself was expanded. Nay, the gates of Jerusalem, they too must be thrown wide open to receive the precious treasure. The general enlargement found utterance in a suitable form from the rich stores of David's heart (Psa. xxiv).

THE ODE OF TRIUMPH.

1. Jehovah's is the earth and all that it contains,
2. The globe and its inhabitants;
3. For on the seas he hath founded it,
4. And on the rivers he hath established it.
5. Who shall ascend the mountain of Jehovah?
6. And who shall stand in its holy places?
7. The clean of hands and the pure of heart,
8. Who lusteth not for deceit,
9. Nor sweareth to a falsehood;
10. He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah.
11. And mercy from the God of his salvation.
12. This is the race of thy worshippers,
13. Of those who seek thy face, O God of Jacob.
14. Lift up, ye gates, your heads!
15. And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors!
16. That the King of glory may come in.
17. Who is this King of glory?
18. Jehovah, strong and mighty,
19. Jehovah mighty in battle!
20. Lift up, ye gates, your heads!
21. And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors!
22. That the King of glory may come in.
23. Who is the king of glory?
24. Jehovah of hosts,
25. He is the King of glory!

he ode, in its several parts, describes the ceremony. We numbered the lines for the sake of brief references. Instantly of the great body of the faithful, with David at their head, there were, it would appear, three choirs, coming singers and players on instruments. The three were—

first, a chorus of young women; second, a chorus of young men; and third, a chorus of adults. These three united, and formed a grand chorus. The chorus of adults began the song, singing, as the procession advanced toward the city walls,

a fine anthem in praise of God's true worshippers, which begins with the thirteenth line. A more appropriate prologue there could not be. The moment the city gates were in view,

a chorus of girls broke out in the words contained in lines thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen. They were answered by the chorus of boys who sang the seventeenth line. Then the two united to chant the noble strain of lines eighteen and nineteen.

The moment the words were ended, the girls again burst forth with the jubilant command conveyed in the words from line twenty to line twenty-two. The challenge found in the twenty-third line was then poured forth by the boys. It was met by the reply contained in line the twenty-fourth, sung by the girls.

Finally, girls and boys united to sing the same answer in concert; and the whole concludes by all joining to sound forth the same grand theme.

And while the glad voices of thousands rent the air, and went up in joy and gladness to Jehovah, the ark entered the holy city, and took its place there as the palladium of the new state. Nor ever (except for a brief season) did it re-pass those gates, until the nation became captive first to Assyria and then to Rome.

David himself, clad in priest's attire, had danced before the ark. Overjoyed with the result, the king hastened home to pour forth his gladness. Instead of congratulations, however, he was met by reproaches. In a strain of bitter irony, his wife Michal, the daughter of Saul, vented her displeasure. But David's religious enthusiasm was not to be blighted by the jeers of a silly woman, who concealed a daughter's jealousy under the pretended vexation of a wife.\*

The frowardness of Michal points to polygamy as its cause. Here one of David's greatest weaknesses comes into relief. Not content to obey the spirit of the religious system with

\* 2 Sam. vi.

• which he was so intimately connected, he formed a harem,\* and thus brought on himself incessant annoyances and lasting calamities. From its origin, the court of David was remarkable for a certain luxury, in which it contrasts unfavourably with the simple establishments of Saul.

Content for the moment with a provisional organisation of his government, the newly-created monarch hastened to strengthen the internal safety of his kingdom by subduing formidable enemies that lay on its borders. Most to be feared was Moab, the ancient foe of Israel, whose position in the south offered Philistia ready succour. David marched into the territory, and, after a fearful massacre, made its inhabitants tributary. Having secured a strong basis for further operations, the conqueror began to make his way towards the north. On the line of his march stood the Ammonites, old and formidable adversaries. Aware of their peril, and conscious of being unequal to their assailants, the Ammonites formed an alliance with potentates whose territories lay in Syria. The common danger produced a universal confederacy, which stretched along the entire line of the Jordan up to its source in the Bekäah, including the eastern flank of Anti-Lebanon. The quarrel was embittered by a wanton insult. Nahash, king of Ammon, died. David having been friendly with the departed monarch, sent an embassy to express his condolence with his son, whose name was Hanun. The ambassadors were received and treated as if they had been spies. Acting on the principle that to public men disgrace is worse than death, Hanun "took David's servants and shaved off one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle even to their buttocks, and sent them away."† A cry for revenge for this outrage spread through the armies of Israel. David, seizing the favourable juncture, at once marched against his foes, and conquering each in detail, broke up the confederation and made himself master of all the great eastern powers, even Damascus not excepted.

By these achievements, David became a powerful monarch. His dominion extended from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, and from the Dead Sea to the Leontes. In a very short period he had made his name formidable throughout western Asia. Rising to the height of his dignity, he surrounded

\* 2 Sam. v. 13.

† 2 Sam. x.

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himself with a body-guard, and appointed great officers of war in his palace. Such was Joab, who was at the head of the army; Jehoshaphat, who was the royal historiographer; Ithiel and Ahimelech, who were royal chaplains or court poets; Seraiah, the secretary of state; and Benaiah, chief of the police. The king's own sons were also set in places of honour and trust.\*

### DAVID CULTIVATES THE ARTS OF PEACE.

Thus seated on a firm and brilliant throne, David had cause to look back on the past. Devout as he was, he could not fail to be filled with gratitude. Religious sentiments quickened his mind to gentle earthly emotions. His very life he owed to his dear friend Jonathan. And had not that friend laid on him the duty of protecting his defenceless children, when he himself, the heir of a sinking throne, should be no more?† Reminded of the tender and sacred engagement he had contracted with Jonathan, David now inquired if any of his friend's offspring survived. One son still lived. It was Mephibosheth. In the universal dismay caused by the news of the defeat of Saul and Jonathan at Jezreel, the nurse of Mephibosheth let the child fall from her arms. Permanent weakness was the consequence. Here, then, was an object of great pity. In a manner well becoming the friend of Jonathan, David sent for Mephibosheth, and said to him: "Fear not; for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father, and thou shalt eat bread continually at my table."‡ The promise was faithfully observed.

Among other fruits of his warlike achievements, David found leisure to apply himself to the cultivation of the arts of peace. Forming an alliance with Hiram, king of Tyre, he obtained men and materials to build a palace,§ and probably took effectual steps at once to adorn and strengthen his capital. No sooner did he take his seat on his throne within his own

\* In 2 Sam. viii. 18 the words are, "and David's sons were chief rulers," in the Hebrew *Cophanim*, that is "priests." The corresponding passage in 1 Chron. xviii. 17, gives the right explanation of the word "priests:" "and David's sons were chief (or principal officers) about the king." The term "priest" is used in Samuel simply as a general term of dignity.

† 1 Sam. xx. 14.

‡ 2 Sam. ix.

§ 1 Chron. xiv. 1, seq.



house, than he became sensible of a gross incongruity. The ark, the symbol of Jehovah, remained in a tent, while he, Jehovah's servant, sat in ease and dignity in a palace. Surely it became him to build a house for God. Among the officers of his court was one the like of which we should in vain seek in any other palace. It was Nathan. Nathan sustained a two-fold relation. He was alike the prophet of God and the prophet of the king. In other words, he was God's representative with the monarch. The duties of this relation, equally peculiar and perilous, Nathan faithfully discharged. Duty was the only word which the prophet acknowledged—duty seen not in an earthly light, but as taught of God. Admirable were the Hebrew institutions. Can any influence higher, more powerful, or more desirable be conceived? The voice of God sounds in an oriental court; God's wisdom comes into an oriental palace in the person of an officer both appointed and recognised by its sovereign; God's authority speaks to a king by the inspired lips of a venerated prophet. To this prophet David communicates his desire to build a temple, in some measure worthy of Him who filled the universe. The wish, however, was not to be gratified. David being a "man of blood," or a great warrior, his hands were not sufficiently clean for so holy a task. Not improbably the prophet discerned other reasons. David had reached the height of prosperity. What man ever stood firm on the dizzy pinnacle? Even he who, by his devout reverence towards Jehovah, had hitherto shown himself to be a man "after God's own heart," began now to vacillate. Elated by his warlike successes, the glory of which he would in his earlier and simpler states of feeling have ascribed solely to Jehovah—dazzled by the splendour which darted up in new shapes on all sides around him—he began to be self-regardful. Even in religion, and while purposing to build a house for God, he calculated the advantages that would hence accrue to himself. Thus divided in aim and sullied in motive, he was not worthy to receive an honour higher than any other. In consequence, he was forbidden to undertake the task, though at the same time his mortified feelings were soothed by a promise that the crown should be hereditary in his family.\*

\* 1 Chron. xvi.

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### DAVID'S MORAL ECLIPSE.

The downward course of disobedience is only too easy. By his elevation, blinded by false self-love, and tried on by a consciousness of supreme power, David committed the double crime of adultery and murder. The circumstances were these. It would appear that the Ammonites had taken courage from despair, and resolved to strike the first blow for national independence. The king of Israel sent Joab to suppress the attempt, while he himself remained in Jerusalem. After a long contest, the Hebrews were successful. Among its fearful events was the siege of the vital—Rabbah by name. Its capture seemed all but impossible. The soldiers of Israel were more than once repulsed. At length the fall of the city became inevitable. The general commanding in chief sent for his sovereign, that the latter might have a full share of the glory. David hastened to the scene of action. The city fell, and frightful atrocities were committed on the natives. These deeds may be palliated, but they must not be excused. True, the practices of war were often very cruel; true, also, the Ammonites had demanded the right eye of the Hebrews when likely to become captives; true, the Ammonites were as barbarous in their dispositions as they were formidable by their position and their power; but a religious king should have given the world an example of mercy.\* Alas! for human sinfulness. This king came to be remembered for that massacre by defilements most foul. During the protracted siege of Rabbah, David, while walking on the flat roof of his palace, saw Bathsheba in a bath. A very beautiful woman she was, the wife of Uriah, a soldier of distinction, who was with the army in Persæa. Inflamed by guilty passion, David took Bathsheba to his bed. Ere long the time arrived when concealment of the consequences became impossible. Hoping to make it appear that the conception of Bathsheba was to be ascribed to her husband, David sent and ordered him to return to his home. Uriah came back, but the design of the monarch was frustrated. Then was the aid of strong drink put into action. This scheme also was a failure. A third device was too successful. The king wrote to Joab, saying, "Set Uriah in the forefront of the

\* 2 Sam. x.; 1 Chron. xix.

hottest battle, and retire from him that he may be smitten and die." The command was obeyed, and Uriah perished.\* Some palliation of these crimes may be found in the fact that David took Bathsheba into his harem. Nevertheless, foul deeds these are, and as such must they be unhesitatingly characterised. The enemies of religion ought not to be encouraged by any attempt to cloak these transgressions. The sole evil here arises from want of faith on the part of the friends of the Bible. Those who have faith in God, have faith in truth; and having such faith, dare not utter one word in extenuation of crime, nor for a moment suppose that the cause of God can be served by toleration toward any breach of God's eternal laws. And why should there be here any timidity? Religion is not answerable for David's misdeeds. It was only by defying religion that David committed those dreadful sins. David had even to disown himself ere he could fall so low. The higher law of his mind, the law of God, would have preserved him. His fall came from the want or decay of religion. Had his moral strength been equal to his emotional richness, he would have stood in the day of temptation. Like other men, David had two natures—an inner and an outer—the new and the old. The inner nature owned God and loved to commune with God. The outer nature was enslaved to sense. Hence the incongruities of his character. The leaven within should have leavened the whole lump. But let us not be too severe in our condemnation, remembering our own frailties, and the frequency of our own lapses into sin.

#### DAVID IS REPROVED BY NATHAN.

Any way, however, the Bible is not liable to impeachment on account of David's wrong-doings. For there was a prophet in that court, the prophet of whom we had just now a glimpse. Expressly sent of God for the occasion, Nathan went to David and delivered his burden in the following terms: "There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds; but the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had brought and nourished up; and it grew up together with him and with his children; it did eat of his own

\* 2 Sam. xi.; 1 Chron. xx.

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meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd to dress for the wayfaring man, but took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man that was come to him." The moment Nathan's lips closed, David burst forth in virtuous indignation, saying: "As Jehovah liveth, the man that hath done this shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he had no pity."\* Then, like a thunderbolt from the very hand of God, came the prophet's word to David, "Thou art the man!" Conscience-smitten, the monarch, we may suppose, bent his head on his bosom. After a moment's pause, the stern but lofty preacher, now David's judge, gave sentence in these terrific words: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel; I anointed thee king over Israel, and delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife. Now, therefore, the sword shall never depart from thine house, because thou hast despised me, and because thou hast taken the wife of Uriah to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house."

#### DAVID'S PUNISHMENT.

Overwhelmed with confusion, David could say no more than, "I have sinned against the Lord." The contrite confession was accepted. David's life was spared, but he had given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, an occasion of which even to this day they make the most. Therefore, that no one might truly say that a king of Israel might sin with impunity, Nathan added, "The child that is born unto thee shall surely die." That child was very dear to David. To smite him here was to smite him in his tenderest place. The child forthwith sickened. "David, therefore, besought God for the child; and he fasted and lay all night upon the earth." For some days did the anguish and the humiliation last. Behold the triumphant sovereign, whose nod is life or

\* 2 Sam. xii.

death to myriads—him who a few hours ago sat on that ivory throne, to all appearance pure as its own surface, holding his head high as master of all, and listening to give judgment in a case of injury pleaded by his own royal prophet—behold him there, in a dark recess, prostrate on the soil, silent, except when he sobs or groans, his hair dishevelled, his garments torn, his head covered with sackcloth and ashes; there does he remain seven days and seven nights, and he neither eats, nor drinks, nor sleeps. Such is the fruit and such the terror of sin. Who then has the hardihood to say that the religion of the Bible is lenient to sin, or is aught but severe toward even its chief and pattern characters?

At length the child died. If the king suffered so much agony at the child's sickness, could he possibly endure an announcement of its death? The report would cost him his reason. His servants must not, would not, tell him. But parental grief has other eyes and ears than those of flesh and blood. Alive only to the one question, David soon perceived that his child had left the earth. Thereupon, "he arose, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of Jehovah and worshipped; then came he to his own house and did eat." Wondering at a change which they could not explain, the courtiers ventured to ask the monarch: "What is this? thou didst fast and weep for the child when it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst arise and eat bread?" The king replied: "While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."\*

#### DAVID BELIEVES IN ANOTHER LIFE.

Learned men have doubted or denied the existence in Israel of the belief in man's immortality. Rewards derived immediately from a future state of existence are certainly not proposed to man in the Mosaic institutions; yet illogical and wholly unwarranted is the inference that a hereafter was unknown to the Hebrew race. The words just cited of themselves suffice to prove the confident expectation of a life beyond the grave

\* 2 Sam. xii.

among God's servants of the old covenant. "I shall go to him;" these are the words from the centre of the heart, from the centre of a father's heart, from the centre of a father's heart smitten, bowed down, and full of woe. If there are true words, words coming from such a source are true. In this language, David spoke out the faith that was in him; he uttered the faith that was embedded in his soul; he expressed what with him was a simple certainty and an expectation no less confident than delightful. Faith begets faith. David's assurance may become ours. The power of religion is always the same. The God who gave David that confidence will inspire with similar confidence all who serve him with loving and adoring hearts.

## DAVID'S DECLINE AND OLD AGE.

David's misconduct with Bathsheba was the turning-point in his earthly existence. Up to that time, his sun rose toward the meridian. There it stopped for a moment, and then began to sink, declining until it set in night. Crime, in its consequences, if not in its penalties, follows the guilty to the end of their days. Our misdeeds become our scourges. The passions we do not control are made into whips with which we are flogged. It was so with David. Guilty of domestic infidelity, he was punished with domestic woe. The Hebrew heart was peculiarly susceptible of the emotions which enrich and refine the home, and cement its relationships in inseparable bonds. And never, perhaps, was there in Israel a heart more tender and more rich in family affection than that of David. Terrible to him were the blows which he suffered in his home and family; so sure and so keen are the arrows of God's displeasure. The series of calamities began in the very centre of his palace. Maacah, princess of Geshur, lying at the southern foot of Anti-Lebanon, had given David a son by name Absalom, and a daughter called Tamar. Tamar was very lovely. Amnon, David's eldest son by his wife Ahinoam,\* became enamoured of her. Instead of resisting the guilty passion, he, at the advice of Jonadab, David's nephew, formed a stratagem by which he became master of her person. Disgust following satiety, he drove the victim of his lust from his presence. Distracted with

\* 2 Sam. iii. 2.

grief and laden with shame, Tamar appealed to her own brother Absalom. The young man, exasperated by the foul dishonour, resolved on revenge. Concealment, however, was necessary. For two years he, accordingly, in a truly Shemite spirit, nursed his hate. At length a favourable opportunity came. It was the season of sheep-shearing—a season of general festivity. An invitation was sent to David and his other sons, by Absalom, to attend a feast that he had prepared. The king remained in his capital, but his sons accepted their brother's hospitality. The banquet was served. The feasting went joyously on until all were heated and absorbed in the carousals, when at a preconcerted signal, Amnon was struck dead. Forthwith seized with fear and horror, his brothers fled. Rumour reported in Jerusalem that all the princes had been slain. At the tidings, anguish seized David's heart. The error was, however, ere long corrected. The young men returned, and when they came into the presence of their father, they and he in common wept at once for joy and for grief. Meanwhile, Absalom had left his home. Taking refuge with Talmai, king of Geshur in Syria,\* he remained three years an exile from his own home and from his father's court. His absence was sorely felt by David, to whom Absalom was specially dear. The young prince was at length permitted to return to the capital, and, after a long probation, to see his father's face.† The interview led to a reconciliation. The father was sincere, but the son concealed evil purposes which he durst not avow. Those purposes aimed at nothing less than his father's crown. Singularly fitted, by beauty of person and popular manners, to gain the hearts of the multitude, Absalom formed a conspiracy, the consequence of which was the expulsion of David from his capital.

#### THE KING QUITS JERUSALEM.

In all history there is no scene more touching than the retirement of David from the holy city. Advanced in years, the king of Israel flies before a son whom he tenderly loves. Leaving the city by the eastern gate, David passed the brook Kedron, and ascended the Mount of Olives, that, crossing its summit, he might escape beyond the Jordan. We seem to

\* 2 Sam. xv. 8.

† 2 Sam. xiv.

see him, bareheaded, with his thin grey hairs, weeping as he goes at the base ingratitude of which he was the victim, and thousands of the people streaming forth from the capital in his train, wailing and rending their garments. Though overcome with grief, David is superior to selfish absorption in his own troubles. Beholding Attai at his side, he says, "Wherefore goest thou with us? Return, for thou art a stranger and an exile." The answer is, "In what place my lord the king shall be, whether in life or death, there will thy servant be." His eyes fell on the ark borne in the mournful train by Zadok the high priest. "No," says the afflicted man, "the ark must not follow my fortunes; carry it back to the city; if God willeth, I shall see it again in its own place; but if he say, 'I have no delight in thee,' behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him."

The tranquil resignation that utters these words forsakes not the monarch's countenance, when, farther on in his journey, he is ignominiously assailed by Shimei, who reproaches him with the destruction of the house of Saul. Abishai interposes, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head." "Let him curse; it is God's scourge; behold my son seeketh my life, how much more this Benjaminite: let him alone; it may be that the Lord will look on my affliction, and requite me good for his cursing this day." And so David goes forward, master of his passions, because trusting in God; and as he goes thus patiently, see how Shimei on the hill-side keeps in a line with his advancing footsteps, and hurls at the banished monarch stones and maledictions.

Meanwhile, Absalom entered Jerusalem, and, as if to make reconciliation impossible, took possession of his father's harem. Nothing remained but an appeal to arms. The dreadful contest issued in the death of Absalom. But too dearly, far too dearly, purchased was that victory. Never was a guilty child more piteously bewailed. On receiving the sad intelligence, the king was much moved, and went up to a secret chamber and wept, and as he went, he said, "O, my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" The grief spread throughout the army. Joab, the generalissimo, in vain tried to calm the weeping and sobbing conqueror. Still did the king cover his



#### DAVID, THE POET-KING OF ISRAEL.

in obedience to his own exhortation, "Let us now praise famous men and our fathers that begat us," he thus describes the great hero and the chief luminary of Israel. "As is the fat taken away from the peace offering, so was David chosen out of the children of Israel. He played with lions as with kids, and with bears as with lambs. Slew he not a giant when he was but yet young? and did he not take away reproach from the people when he lifted up his hand with the stone in the sling, and beat down the boasting of Goliath? For he called upon the most high Lord; and he gave him strength in his right hand to slay that mighty warrior, and set up the horn of his people. So the people honoured him with ten thousands, and praised him in the blessings of the Lord in that he gave him a crown of glory. For he destroyed the enemies on every side, and brought to nought the Philistines, and brake their horn in sunder unto this day. In all his works he praised the Holy One Most High with words of glory; with his whole heart he sung songs, and loved Him that made him. He set singers also before the altar, that by their voices they might make sweet melody, and daily sing praises in their songs. He beautified their feasts, and set in order the solemn times until the end, that they might praise his holy name, and that the temple might sound from morning. The Lord took away his sins and exalted his horn for ever; he gave him a covenant of kings, and a throne of glory in Israel."\*

\* Ecclesiasticus xlviii.

